AFTER THE BATTLE

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Front Cover: The house where Anne Frank *(inset)* wrote her diary while in hiding and from where she was taken in 1944 to her death at Belsen concentration camp. (Karel Margry and AFF/AFS)

Centre Pages: The remains of an armoured carrier, Indian pattern on a Canadian Ford Quad chassis, lying near the railway station at Yamethin, Burma. (Elliott Smock)

Back Cover: The scene at Taukkyan War Cemetery on March 5, 1997 where the crew of Dakota KN563 were laid to rest. (Department of Veterans Affairs, Canada)

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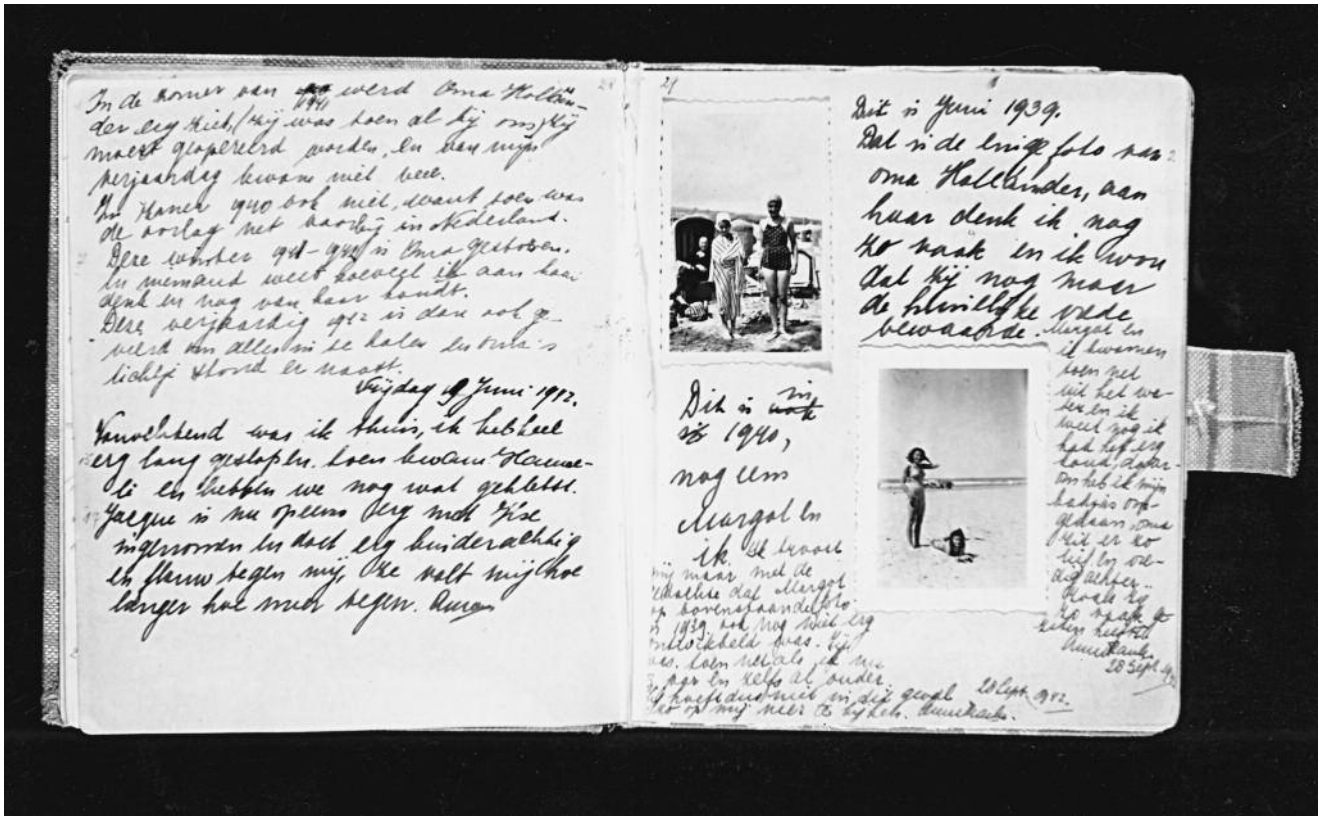
Nearly every year, usually in May, the Frank family went to the photographer to have a sheet of mini photo portraits taken. This series of shots from Anne's sheets from the years 1935 to 1941 show her gradual change from a little child to a young teenager. (AFF/AFS)



ANNE FRANK

By David Barnouw

Of all the victims of the Nazi genocide on the Jews, Anne Frank is probably the most famous. Her diary, written in hiding between 1942-44 and published posthumously in 1947, is without a doubt the best-known literary work to survive the holocaust, and reputedly the most widely read non-fiction book after the Bible. Her life story and the extraordinary quality and tone of her writings have made her a symbol, a veritable icon, both of innocent youth and of the survival of humanity under totalitarian oppression. The house in Amsterdam where she, together with her family and others, spent over two years in hiding has become a place of pilgrimage visited by hundreds of thousands each year.

Anne Frank. There are few other names in modern history or literature which require so little introduction as that of this young Jewish girl from the Netherlands. Though she only lived to the age of 15 and left us only one literary work, she is known by millions all over the world because of her diaries, published posthumously after the war. The vivid and dramatic way in which they portray the thoughts and experiences of people in hiding from Nazi persecution, coupled with the optimistic and idealistic tone which pervades them, have made the book an all-time classic, sold in millions of copies all over the world, and adapted for the stage and screen. The house where she and her family spent two years in hiding, now a museum, has become a must for every tourist visiting Amsterdam. *Right:* **Anne as she looked in May 1942, aged 13, a picture taken two months before she and her family went into hiding. The author of our story, David Barnouw, is staff researcher and public relations officer at the Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation in Amsterdam. He was the co-editor of *The Diaries of Anne Frank. The Critical Edition*, the definitive textbook published in 1989 (the original Dutch edition appeared in 1986), and is one of the world's leading experts on the history of Anne Frank and her diaries from which the illustration** *(top)* **is reproduced. (AFF/AFS)**

Anne Frank was born in Frankfurt in Germany on June 12, 1929. Her parents, Otto and Edith Frank, and elder sister Margot were then living at No. 307 Marbachweg (the right half of the building), where the young family had moved in 1927. Located in the town district of Bertramshöhe, the house was a new one, having been built in 1925. The Franks occupied the first and second floors.

The story of Anne Frank starts in Germany. The Franks were a banking family from Frankfurt, Anne's grandfather being the founder and director of the Bankgeschäft Michael Frank. The Franks had lived in the city for generations, Anne's father, Otto Heinrich Frank, being born there on May 12, 1889. Educated at the Lessing Gymnasium, he went to Heidelberg University to study art. After one semester, he left for New York, together with Nathan Strauss (of the family which owned the famous Macy department store in Manhattan) to gain business experience. When his father died in 1909, Otto returned to Germany, though he still went back to New York several times. In World War I, he served on the Western Front, demobilising as a lieutenant. The family story goes that he personally brought back the requisitioned horses of his company to the rightful owners in Pomerania. It took him two months to get back home. But the family business was not flourishing and Otto Frank, with his American experience, went abroad again, this time to Amsterdam where in 1923 he founded the company of M. Frank & Sons, for banking and trading in foreign currency. The bank's office was in the centre of the city, at Keizersgracht 604, which was also Otto's private address. However, the enterprise was a failure, and by 1925 Otto was back in Frankfurt where, together with his brother Herbert, he tried to uphold the family business.

On May 12, 1925, Otto married Edith Holländer, daughter of a manufacturer from Aachen and 11 years younger. They spent their honeymoon in Italy. The couple first went to live in with Otto's mother, but in August 1927 they moved to a house of their own, at Marbachweg 307. Two daughters were born: Margot on February 16, 1926, and Anne on June 12, 1929. In March 1931, the family moved to a bigger house at Ganghoferstrasse 24, nearby in a well-to-do quarter of Frankfurt.

Left: **This photo was taken on the rear balcony, shortly after Anne and her mother came home from hospital. Anne is on the lap of Mrs Dassing, the maternity nurse, with her mother standing behind her. Margot, here aged three, is on the left on the lap of Kathi, the Franks' housekeeper. The three other girls are neighbours who have come to admire the new sprout. (AFF/AFS)** *Right:* **The same balcony 70 years on.**

One reason for the Franks having moved to Marbachweg in 1927 was that it had a garden where their children could play. *Above:* **1931: Anne in the sandbox, with her mother by her side. (AFF/AFS)**

Margot with a friend, Butzy Könitzer, in the back garden, 1932. Otto Frank was a keen photographer and took many pictures of his children. Because several of the family's photo albums have survived, there exist today a surprising wealth of pictures of Anne and the Frank family from before the war. (AFF/AFS) *Right:* **With thick foliage darkening the garden, this is the best match possible today.**

In April 1931, the Franks moved to No. 24 Ganghoferstrasse, about a mile north-west of Marbachweg, on the other side of Escherheim road. Compared to the house on Marbachweg, this was a spacious villa located in a pleasant side street. The Franks lived here until March 1933.

IN DIESEM HAUSE LEBTE ANNE FRANK
GEB 12 6 1929 IN FRANKFURT A MAIN
SIE STARB ALS OPFER DER NATIONAL
SOZIALISTISCHEN VERFOLGUNG 1945
IM KZ LAGER BERGEN BELSEN IHR LEBEN
UND STERBEN UNSERE VERPFLICHTUNG
DIE FRANKFURTER JUGEND

A plaque on the house, dedicated on June 12, 1957, commemorates: 'In this house lived Anne Frank, born at Frankfurt-am-Main on June 12, 1929. A victim of National-Socialist persecution, she died at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945. Her life and death — our obligation. The youth of Frankfurt.'

Left: **Margot, Grace (a friend) and Anne squatting below the front window. (AFF/AFS)**
Right: **Shrub and trees have grown where the girls once sat.**

However, the position of the bank, already weakened by the loss of the Amsterdam affiliation, and decisively affected by the economic depression, suffered a final blow when Otto's brother and partner Herbert in 1932 became involved in an investment fraud, for which he was arrested and tried. Though he was acquitted, it blemished the firm's name.

When the Nazis came to power in January 1933, it was clear to Otto Frank there was no longer any future in Germany for him and his family. In March 1933, the Jewish mayor of Frankfurt was forced to resign. Jewish civil servants were dismissed. On April 1, SA stormtroopers targeted Jewish shops and firms. The Franks were 'assimilated Jews', feeling themselves more German than Jewish, so being branded 'not German at all' came as a severe shock.

Right: **On March 10, 1933, a cold Friday, Otto snapshot his wife and two daughters on the Schillerplatz next to the Hauptwache guardhouse (on the left) in the centre of Frankfurt. Two days later, Sunday, March 12, there would be municipal elections in Frankfurt in which the Nazis would win 42 of the 85 seats. On Monday, SA stormtroopers would raise the Swastika flag on the town hall and the Jewish Oberbürgermeister, Ludwig Landmann, would be forced to resign, his seat taken by the Nazi Friedrich Krebs. (AFF/AFS)** *Far right:* **The tram shelter has gone and an underground station entrance now occupies the site on Schillerplatz.**

With the Nazis' rise to power, the Franks decided to flee Germany, their choice of refuge being Amsterdam in the Netherlands. By late 1933, they had moved into a second-floor apartment on Merwedeplein, a recently-built modern housing area in the southern part of Amsterdam. The Franks' house, No. 37II, is on the right. (AFF/AFS)

Because Otto Frank had been in Amsterdam before and because there was widespread belief that Holland was a safe country, neutral in World War I, the Franks decided to emigrate to the Netherlands. They first moved from Frankfurt to Aachen, near the Dutch border, moving in with Edith's mother in the summer of 1934. From there, Otto went ahead to Amsterdam, to start a business and look for a place where the family could live. His wife and daughters stayed with grandmother Holländer for the time being.

Otto first rented a boarding room at Stadionkade 24, but in the autumn of 1933 he found a good, second-floor apartment at Merwedeplein 37II, in a newly-built, modern part of Amsterdam. Edith and Margot moved to the new home in December, but Anne did not come over until March 1934: 'I was put on the table for Margot as a birthday present', she later wrote in her diary.

Right: **Anne soon found new friends among the children in the neighbourhood. Here she is (right) playing on Merwedeplein with her friend Sanne Ledermann. Picture taken in 1935. (AFF/AFS)**

Left: **Anne (second from left) and friends in the sandpit in the garden of the Toby family, who lived at Merwedeplein 3. (AFF/AFS)** *Right:* **The present-day owner of No. 3, Mrs van de Bovenkamp, very kindly allowed us to photograph her back garden. The fence and the sandbox have gone, but the rest remains the same.**

In 1934, at age five, Anne went to the Montessori School in nearby Niersstraat, her first two years there being spent in infant class. This photo was taken in 1936, when she was in the first year of primary school. Anne is the girl in the centre. On the right, her class teacher, Mr van Gelder. Anne's school results were excellent, though she usually had poor marks for algebra. (AFF/AFS)

The traditional school portrait. This particular one was taken in 1941, when Anne was 12 years old and in the fifth form. (AFF/AFS) *Below:* **An original school table improves our comparison.**

All classrooms in the school were of identical design. Today, though it has modernised the others, the school has kept one room in its original state.

The Frank family lived a peaceful life at Merwedeplein. More German-Jewish refugee families were living at or near the square (by early 1939, about 25.000 German Jews had found shelter in the Netherlands). Margot and Anne made friends with several of them, but later they played just as easy with Dutch friends. They went to the Montessori School in the nearby Niersstraat and nothing seemed to disturb their carefree life. Grandmother Holländer left Aachen in March 1939 to come and live with the Frank family. (Already of weak health, she died in January 1942, aged 76.)

Right: **Today, the school is named the Anne Frank School. Enlarged fragments of Anne's diary handwriting adorn the building's colourful facade.**

Left: **From 1934 to 1940, Otto Frank ran his Opekta business from an office on Singel 400, in the centre of Amsterdam.**

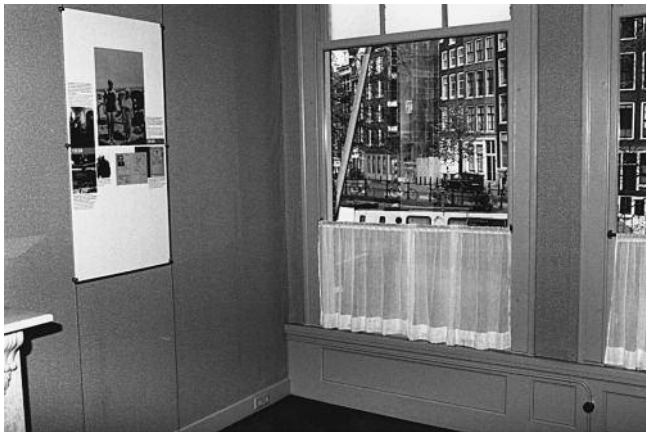
Centre and right: **Anne photographed by her father (note his shadow) on the steps of the premises. (AFF/AFS)**

Left: **On December 1, 1940, Otto Frank moved his Opekta and Pectacon businesses to new premises on Prinsengracht 263 (see map on page 12). The firms' warehouse, where the spices were ground, weighed and packed, was on the ground floor. The door furthest on the left led to the storage rooms on the second and third floors. The one to the right of that led to the offices on the first floor, a main office at the front and a smaller office behind that. No pictures showing the whole building appear to have been taken during the war, this one, from the early 1950s, being the earliest one known to exist. (RIOD)**
Above: **Prinsengracht 263, today the Anne Frank House museum. Our picture was taken from across the Prinsengracht canal and before opening hours. At other times, the spot is a popular stop for the many tourists' sight-seeing boats cruising the canal.**

To promote his business, Otto Frank had this advertising lorry on which Opekta's products were demonstrated. (AFF/AFS)

Otto Frank did not go back to banking. Before leaving Germany, he had acquired a license from the German 'Opekta' company to start a Dutch agency for the retail of pectin, a product used by housewives to make jams and jellies from fruit products. (His brother-in-law, Eric Elias, had done the same in Switzerland.) However, one of the problems of the trade was the fact that it was seasonal, jam-making only taking place in the weeks following the fruit harvest, so Otto looked for additional trade. In 1938, he expanded the business with a firm called Pectacon for the 'trade in and manufacture of chemical products and provisions'. His main new product was special herbs, used by butchers for sausage production. Though not a gold mine, the combined business made enough profit to make a good living.

By 1939, Frank employed a considerable number of people. His right-hand man from the start was Victor Kugler. Born in Hohenelbe in Austria in 1900, he had emigrated to Holland in 1920. Johannes Kleiman, a Dutchman born in 1896 (who had already worked for Otto Frank's Amsterdam bank in 1924), was the book-keeper. Supervising the herb manufacture was Hermann van Pels. Born of Jewish-Dutch parents in 1890 in Gehrde in Germany, he had fled with his wife and son Peter from Osnabrück to the Netherlands in 1937. Another employee was Hermine (Miep) Santrouschitz. Born in Vienna in 1909, after World War I she had been sent, like many undernourished Austrian children, to Holland to recuperate. She had stayed on, and by 1939 was engaged to be married to Jan Gies. She had an all-round office job in Otto's business and was joined in the summer of 1937 by Bep Voskuijl. In addition, Frank employed several sales agents and warehouse workers. The firm was first located at Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 120, then from the autumn of 1934 at Singel 400, but on December 1, 1940, it moved to Prinsengracht 263, a building with good office and warehouse space.



Left: **Staff picture taken in the office on the first floor in 1941. Front row, L-R; Victor Kugler, Bep Voskuijl and Miep Santrouschitz (soon to be Miep Gies). Back row: Esther and Pine, two girls who only worked in the office for a short time. (AFF/AFS)** *Above:* **The same corner with the mantelpiece on the left. This is the front office, the view through the window being that on Prinsengracht.**

Left: **Victor Kugler and Johannes Kleimann pictured on the steps of No. 263 in 1945. Gies, Voskuijl, Kugler and Kleimann would all four, under very difficult circumstances and at great personal risk, help the Frank family during the two years they were in hiding. (AFF/AFS)** *Right:* **Entrance to No. 263 today.**

On June 12, 1939, Anne's tenth birthday, she had a group photo taken with all her friends on the pavement outside her home. L-R: Lucie van Dijk, Anne, Sanne Ledermann, Hannah (Lies) Goslar, Juultje Ketellapper, Kitty Egyedi, Mary Bos, Ietje Swillens, Martha van den Berg. (AFF/AFS)

When war came in September 1939, most Dutch remained sure that Holland would stay neutral, but the Franks had their doubts. Margot and Anne had pen-friends in the United States and in a letter, written by Margot two weeks before the German invasion of the Netherlands, she said: 'We often listen to the radio as times are very exciting; having a frontier with Germany and being a small country we never feel safe.'

After the Germans occupied Holland in May 1940, their lives at first seemed not to change at all. The Germans behaved well and their officials even seemed to stop radical Dutch Nazis who wanted pogroms. But after the summer, the occupier began to slowly introduce the first anti-Jewish measures. In July, Jews were removed from the air-raid service; in October, teachers, university professors and other civil servants had to sign a paper declaring whether they were Jewish or not. With a few exceptions everybody signed. In November, all Jewish civil servants were dismissed.

In February 1941, the anti-Jewish aggression of Dutch Nazis grew stronger and the Jewish population, helped by their non-Jewish neighbours, started to fight back. That was the sign for the Germans to close off part of the Jewish quarters and round up over 400 Jewish men and boys. In protest, Amsterdam and the surrounding region, in a unique demonstration of solidarity, rose up in a mass strike. Fiercely crushed after two days, it failed to stop further persecution.

Certain that the Nazis would sooner or later seize possession of Jewish businesses, Otto Frank tried to protect his property. In October 1940, he created a new firm pseudo-owned by his non-Jewish employee Kugler and Jan Gies, Miep Santrouschitz's fiancé. Then, in March 1941, he nominally handed over Pectacon to Kleiman who sold it to this new firm, now named Gies & Co. Though the Germans saw through the scheme and appointed a Treuhändler (trustee) to liquidate the firm, with his friends' help Frank managed to stay in possession of his business. A similar construction, with Kleiman replacing Frank as director in December 1941, saved Opekta.

More anti-Jewish measures followed. After the summer holidays of 1941, Margot and Anne, like all Jewish children, were forced to go to a Jewish school, where all pupils and teachers were Jewish. They went to the Jewish Lyceum in the Stadstimmertuinen. In May 1942, the Germans ordered all Jews to wear the Yellow Star to separate them from non-Jews. Fear and uncertainty grew. Nobody seemed to know what would happen next.

On June 12, 1942, her 13th birthday, Anne among other presents was given an autograph album, nearly square in shape, with a hard, red and white checked cover. She decided to use it as a diary. The first lines she wrote, that same June 12, were: 'I hope I shall be able to confide in you completely, as I have never been able to do in anyone before, and I hope that you will be a great support and comfort to me.'

On June 15, she wrote about the past year: 'Now that the Germans rule the roost here we are in real trouble, first there was rationing and everything had to be bought with coupons, then, during the two years they have been here, there have been all sorts of Jewish laws. Jews must wear a yellow star; Jews must hand in their bicycles; Jews are banned from trams and are forbidden to use any car, even a private one. Jews are only allowed to do their shopping between three and five o'clock and then only in shops which bear the placard "Jewish Shop"; Jews may only use Jewish barbers; Jews must be indoors from eight o'clock in the evening until six o'clock in the morning; Jews are forbidden to visit theatres, cinemas and other places of entertainment; Jews may not go to

Left: **Summer 1940. Only a few weeks before, on May 10, the German Wehrmacht had invaded the Netherlands, and in a four-day Blitzkrieg defeated the Dutch army. Though the Netherlands were now an occupied country, to many it seemed life just carried on as usual. By now, Anne was maturing into a very pretty girl. This picture of her was taken on the flat roof at the back of the Franks' house. (AFF/AFS)** *Right:* **When we came to match this picture, Mrs Levelt, the lady who today lives at No. 37II, was in hospital with a broken wrist, but we were able to succeed courtesy of her neighbour, Richard Reichmann, who has access to the same roof. All tenants sharing the portico of Nos. 37-38 have to endure the at times annoying curiosity of tourists who (sometimes in bus-loads) arrive to view the house where Anne Frank lived. One neighbour at one time even had his house invaded by a group of Japanese tourists who all were under the impression that they were visiting the actual Franks' apartment. We therefore ask our readers to please respect the tenants' privacy and not look through the windows or ring at any of the doors.**

Right: **On July 16, 1941, Miep Santrouschitz married Jan Gies. Otto Frank and Anne were pictured coming out of the Amsterdam town hall on Oudezijds Voorburgwal with other wedding guests. Edith Frank had stayed at home because grandmother Frank, who lived in with the family, was very ill. (AFF/AFS)**

swimming baths, nor to tennis courts, hockey fields or other sports grounds; Jews may not go rowing; Jews may not take part in public sports; Jews must not sit in their own or their friends' gardens after eight o'clock in the evening; Jews may not visit Christians; Jews must go to Jewish schools, and many more restrictions of a similar kind, so we could not do this and we were forbidden to do that. But life went on in spite of it all. Jacque [Anne's friend Jacqueline van Maarsen] used to say to me: "You are scared to do anything because it may be forbidden".'

Faced with the growing persecution, Otto Frank looked for ways for his family to escape. Like many others, he tried to emigrate from Holland, and in January 1942 even managed to obtain emigration certificates for him and his family. It was hardly more than a German trick to lull the frightened Jews in Holland asleep.

But Otto Frank took other precautions. Behind the building on Prinsengracht was another house which was unused and could not be seen from the street. It was above the rear warehouse and office, and had two floors, with three rooms and a bathroom, and a loft. The entrance was through a door at the end of a narrow corridor from the front office. As early as the spring of 1941, Otto had started to convert this annexe into living premises where the family could go into hiding and stay until the end of the German occupation. Over a period of months, he and his wife moved all sorts of things — furniture, kitchenware — from their home to the annexe. To hide it from view, the rear windows of the front building were painted dark blue, ostensibly for black-out reasons.

Otto informed Miep Gies (she and Jan Gies had married on July 16, 1941), in whom he had complete trust, about his plans and asked her whether she and Jan would help them go into hiding. Though aware of the great risks involved, they agreed. In due course, Victor Kugler, Johannes Kleiman and Bep Voskuijl were also let into the secret. Since they were in the same predicament, Otto offered to his Jewish employee Herman van Pels that, if they wished, he and his family could make use of the same hiding address. The van Pelses gratefully accepted the offer.

Now no longer in use as town hall, the building is today the Grand Hotel.

This photograph is reputed to be the last picture of Anne (right) and Margot before they went into hiding. As no pictures were taken during the two years in the secret annexe, and none have been found from the period after their arrest, this is probably also the very last picture of the two sisters. (AFF/AFS)

Otto Frank had planned to go into hiding on July 16, but German action caused him to advance that with several days. On Sunday, July 5, 1942, 16-year-old Margot got a call-up card for Westerbork. She was among the very first group of 1,000 Dutch Jews to receive such a call-up. Most of these first recipients were young German-Jewish refugees; they were to go there without their parents. Located in north-eastern Holland, Westerbork was officially a 'labour camp'; in reality it was also the Nazis' transit camp to the killing centres in Poland. Though this was of course unknown, most people knew only too well that a call-up for Westerbork forbode nothing good.

For the Frank family this was the signal to go into hiding. Otto told Margot and Anne (the latter still did not know where the hiding place was) to pack their most-important belongings in a satchel. Twice that day, Miep Gies came to fetch clothing and other things to bring to the secret address. Early next morning, Monday July 6, the Franks closed the door behind them, leaving behind most of their possessions; Moortje, the cat; and a note suggesting they had suddenly gone to Switzerland. It was pouring with rain. Jews were forbidden to use public transport or ride bicycles. Still, Margot went ahead with Miep on her bike. The others walked the four kilometres from Merwedeplein to Prinsengracht. They were dressed in two or three layers of clothes and only carried a shopping bag and a satchel, because Jews with suitcases would raise suspicion. On the way, her father disclosed to Anne where the hiding place was.

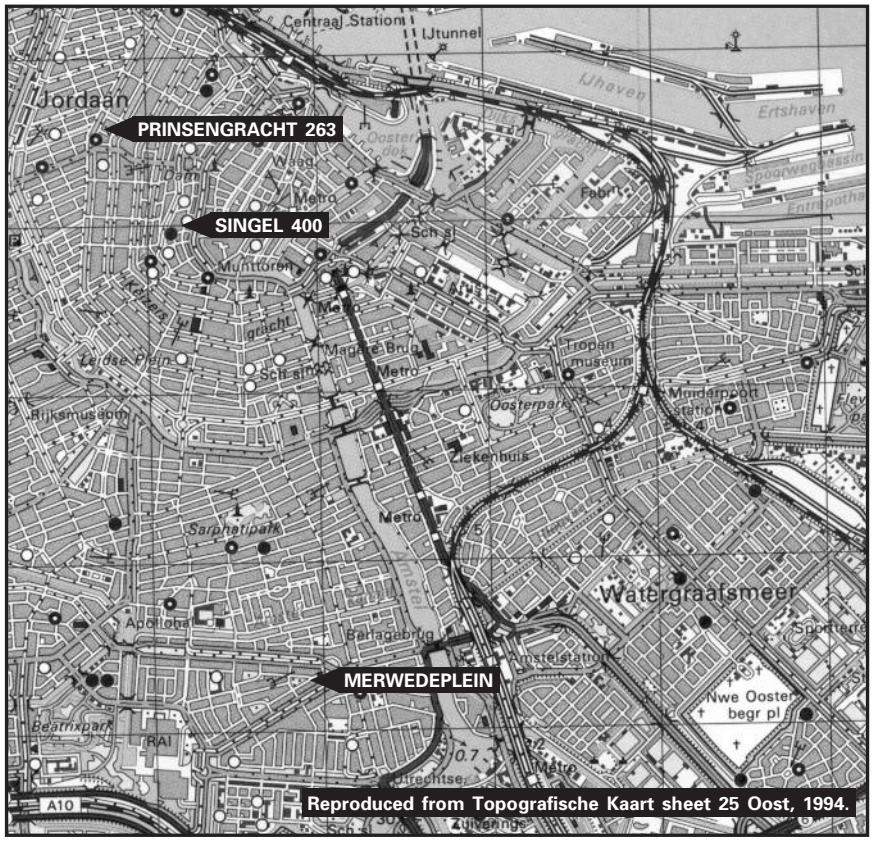
Early on the morning of July 6, 1942, the Frank family left the house on Merwedeplein and went to the secret annexe on Prinsengracht to go into hiding. Margot, whose call-up for the Westerbork camp had triggered the move, cycled there with Miep Gies, but Otto, Edith and Anne walked the four kilometres, burdened with several layers of summer and winter clothing.

On arrival at Prinsengracht, Miep led them upstairs into the annexe, where Margot was already waiting, then closed the door behind them. The family did not know it, but they would not get out until 25 months later. They spent the first few days unpacking, sorting things out, and covering the windows with curtain cloth. It was two days before Anne had time to sit down and describe everything in her diary.

On July 13, after a week, the Van Pels family arrived: father Hermann, mother Augustine and son Peter. Anne was not very impressed with Peter: 'not 16 yet, rather soft, shy, gawky youth, can't expect much from his company.'

At first, the door in the corridor giving access to the secret annexe was not concealed. However, after about a month, Kugler decided it would be better to put a cupboard in front of it. Mr. Voskuijl, Bep's father, who worked in the warehouse on the ground floor, was let into the secret, and by late August he had constructed a hinged bookcase, which could be opened and closed like a door.

The people in the secret annexe lived in constant fear of being discovered. To prevent



This aerial well illustrates the position of the secret annexe behind the office building on Prinsengracht 263. It could not be seen from the road and was connected to the front house by a small corridor. One can see the small window in the attic through which Anne used to look out to the Westertoren church. Also visible is the chestnut tree in the back garden, which she could see from another window. The aerial dates from April 1949, when things still looked much the same as in the war. Since then, the corner block between the house and the church has seen considerable change. (KLM Aerocarto)

The eight people in hiding at the secret annexe:

being seen or heard there were strict rules. They had to adapt to the working hours of the warehouse. During the day, it was forbidden to make any noise, run a tap, or flush the toilet. They had to whisper and sit still as much as possible. Only at noon, when the warehouse workers went home for lunch, the helpers from the office could pay a visit to deliver food (procured with illegal ration cards) and library books. Rubbish was burned in the stove, but in summer this could only be done at night, lest the chimney smoke would make a neighbour suspicious. Anne and the others looked forward to Sundays when they could walk around and talk without fear of being heard.

During the 25 months, there were many scaring moments and narrow escapes. One evening, someone suddenly rang the door bell at 8 p.m. and for a moment they thought it was the Gestapo. On another evening, there was a sudden knocking on the cupboard door. After a moment of fright, it turned out to be Kleiman who had come to warn them that there was a carpenter working in the office. During their time in hiding, there were several break-ins by burglars and thieves, who of course were not aware of their presence, but could well detect and betray them. Sometimes, they themselves made accidental loud noises during the day, for example when Peter dropped a bag of brown beans down the loft stairs.

Meanwhile, the two families struggled to carry on as usual. For Anne, Margot and Peter that meant studying and doing homework. They read French, history, geography, biology, and mathematics, the latter a subject which Anne hated. But it did keep them busy. Otto Frank used to help them with the schoolwork.

Anne loved her picture postcards and movie-star collection and, to liven up her small room, she pasted many of them on the bare walls, transforming it 'into one gigantic picture.'

Life in the confined space put a strain on everyone and, not surprisingly, there were many quarrels and arguments. Anne was a lively, talkative child, and came in for much criticism, especially from her mother and Mr and Mrs van Pels, though she kept trying to improve herself. Unable to go outdoors, her only chance to get a glimpse of the outside world was provided by the attic windows, from which she could see the Westertoren church or the chestnut tree in the rear garden, or just look up at the sky.

During their short visits, Miep and the other helpers told them what was happening in the outside world. Thus they heard that the Jews were being rounded up and sent to the East, and learned which of their friends had been caught. When on July 9, 1942, the BBC Home Service announced that 'Jews are regularly killed by machine-gun fire, hand grenades — and even poisoned by gas', the family must have heard it. Three months later Anne, writing about the bad conditions in the Westerbork camp, commented: 'If it is as bad as this in Holland, whatever will it be like in the distant and barbarous regions they are sent to? We assume that most of them are murdered. The English radio speaks of their being gassed; perhaps that is the quickest way to die.' (October 9, 1942).

With so many people in dire straits, Otto Frank decided there was room for one more person. On November 10, 1942, after four months, the new resident arrived: Fritz Pfeffer, a dentist and good acquaintance of the Franks. Born in 1889 in Giessen in Germany, he had fled to Holland in 1938. To make room, Margot went to sleep in her parents' room. Anne, who from now on had to share her room with Pfeffer, would write a lot about him, more negative then positive.

Otto Frank. (AFF/AFS)

Edith Frank. (AFF/AFS)

Margot Frank. (AFF/AFS)

Anne Frank. (AFF/AFS)

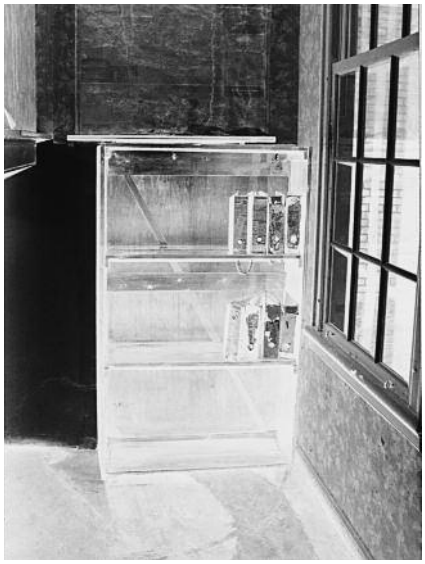
Hermann van Pels. (AFF/AFS)

Augustine van Pels. (AFF/AFS).

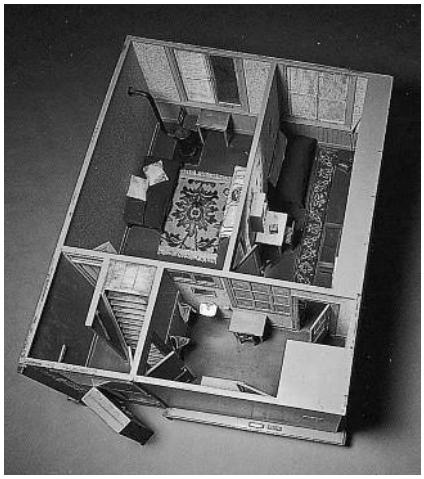
Peter van Pels. (AFF/AFS)

Fritz Pfeffer. (AFF/AFS)

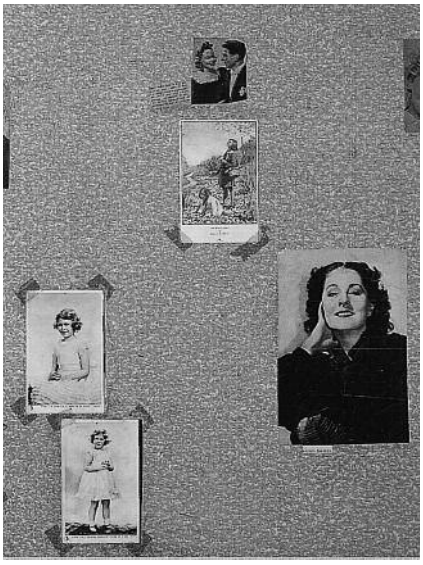
Right and far right: **The entrance to the secret annexe. When the Franks moved into their hiding place in July, there was not yet a bookcase there, just a plain door. The hinged bookcase was only constructed a few weeks later, by Mr Voskuijl, one of the warehouse workers (and Bep Voskuijl's father). Note that a wall map hides the top end of the door.** *Below:* **From the concealed entrance, a narrow corridor on the left led to the living-room and bedroom of Mr and Mrs Frank. From November 1942, Margot also slept here on a camp bed. Today, all rooms in the Anne Frank House are empty and devoid of furniture, with only two large scale models, one on each floor, showing how they were furnished during the war. However, the museum staff have on two occasions (1986 and 1993) reconstructed the wartime situation in real size, dressing up the rooms with furniture and props according to instructions from Otto Frank and Miep Gies. This is the 1986 reconstruction of the Franks' room. (AFF/AFS)**



Right: **The empty room today.** *Below:* **Scale model of the second floor. (AFS)**



A door on the right led to the small room of Anne, which she initially shared with Margot and later with Fritz Pfeffer. Anne wrote most of her diary at the table in this room. *Above:* **1986 reconstruction of the room. (AFF/AFS)** *Below:* **As it is normally is today. Because of its confined space it is quite difficult to adequately photograph the room, even from a corner.**



The pictures and postcards which Anne pasted on the walls are still there, today protected by perspex panels. Among the film stars are Shirley Temple, Ginger Rodgers and Greta Garbo.

For Anne, her diary was her freedom. She could write down whatever she wanted, her thoughts and ideas, her likes and dislikes. She wrote extensively about her life in hiding, her friends at school, her family and the others in the secret annexe, her growing affection for Peter and her longing for freedom. She often wrote her entries in the form of letters to friends; from September 28, 1942, she began addressing many of them to a friend, which she named 'Kitty'. (It is usually said that this was an imaginary name invented by Anne. In actual fact, Anne did have a friend with that name, Kitty Egyedi, though whether she began using 'Kitty' with her in mind is unknown.) After she had filled all pages of her first diary album in December 1942, Anne continued her diary in school exercise books.

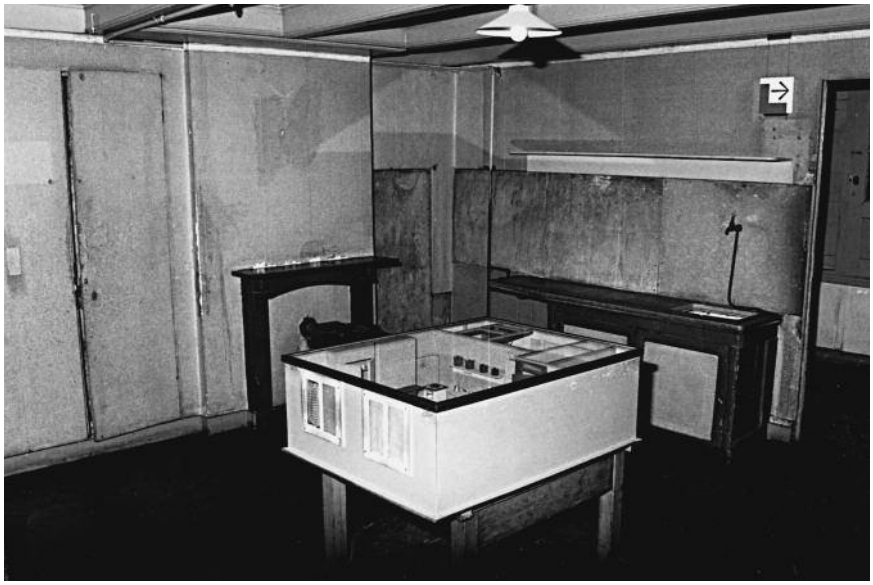
Anne was very fond of writing and dearly wanted to become a writer or journalist later. In 1943, she began, in addition to the diary, to write up short 'Stories and Events from the Achterhuis' [literally 'back house' — the Dutch word for annexe]' in a cash-book Miep had given her.

The whole room measured only some 7 by 14 feet. The door to her parents' room is the one on the right.

The other door from Anne's room gave access to a small bathroom with a washstand and, behind a door (and to the back of the camera), a toilet. The door on the left then completed the circuit of the second floor, leading back to the corridor.

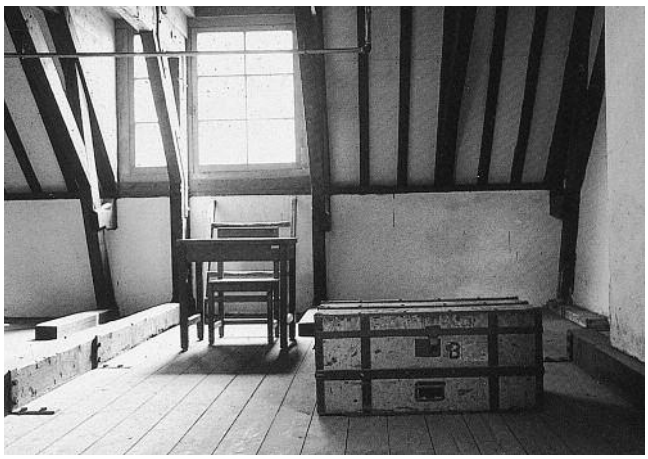
Here, just a few feet from the hinged bookcase, a steep flight of stairs *(left)* **led up to the third floor and into the room of Mr and Mrs van Pels. This was also used as kitchen and scullery and, as it was the most spacious room of the whole annexe, as a general living-room and dining-room for the whole group.** *Right:* **The 1986 reconstruction. (AFF/AFS)**

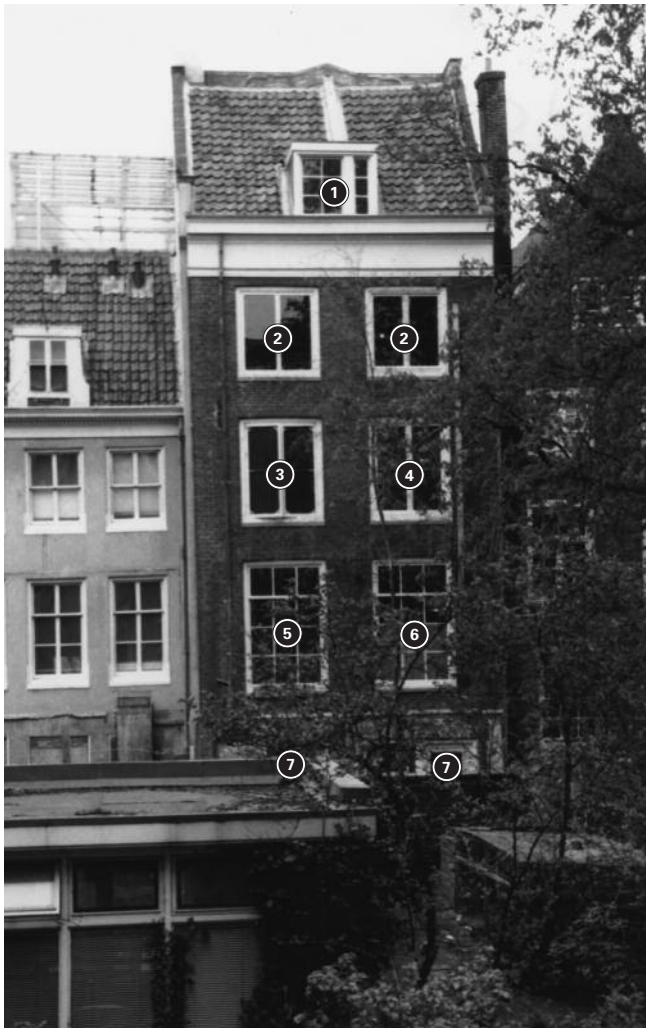
Plan of the four floors of Prinsengracht 263 and annexe. [1] Warehouse. [2] Front office. [3] Office of Kugler and Kleimann. [4] Private office of Otto Frank. [5] Office kitchen. [6] Spices storage rooms. [7] Landing with secret door. [8] Franks' family room. [9] Anne's room. [10] Wash-room and toilet. [11] Van Pels's room. [12] Peter's room. [13] Front loft. (AFF/AFS)



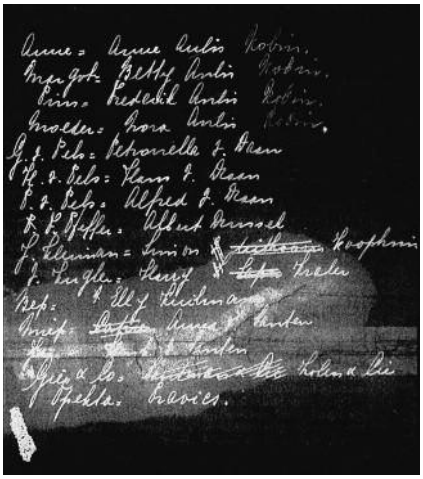
Left: **The empty room, with the scale model of the third floor.** *Right:* **The door to the right of the sink led to a small alcove which served as Peter van Pels's room. His bed just fitted between the wall and the stairs leading up to the attic.**

The attic was used to store food supplies, mostly tins or beans. Anne spent much time here, often together with Peter van Pels, day-dreaming and looking out of the window. *Above:* **This is how it looked shortly after the war. (MAS)** *Below:* **Today, for safety reasons, the loft is no longer accessible to visitors of the Anne Frank House, but a mirror installed at the top of the stairs allows a look into it. (AFF/AFS)**





The secret annexe as seen from the gardens at the back. [1] Attic. [2] Room of Mr and Mrs van Pels, also kitchen and living-room. [3] Anne's room, first shared with Margot and later with Fritz Pfeffer. [4] Room of Otto and Edith Frank, later also of Margot. [5] Otto Frank's private office. Not part of the hiding place, but belonging to the office on Prinsengracht 263. [6] Office kitchen. Not part of the hiding place but used by the office staff. [7] Warehouse. Today, the windows of the upper floors are open but throughout the time the building served as secret hiding place they had blinds fitted.



Left: **Anne's 'first' diary, the checkered autograph album which she was given on her 13th birthday, one month before the family went into hiding. In this, she wrote from June 12 to December 5, 1942. After that, she continued her diary in school exercise books. (RIOD)** *Right:* **In May 1944, Anne decided to rewrite all of her diaries into a second, more literary version. One of the changes she introduced was to give all the people featuring in her texts imaginary names. Her original listing of the name alterations shows that she changed her mind on several of them: for her own family name she initially chose 'Anlis', then 'Robin'; Kleimann at first became 'Uithoorn', then 'Koophuis'; and though she listed Miep Gies as 'Anne van Santen', when it came to the actual rewriting, she continued to call her by her real Christian name — Miep. (AFF/AFS)**

On March 28, 1944, she and the others heard a London broadcast in which the Dutch Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences of the Dutch government-in-exile, Gerrit Bolkestein, advised people in German-occupied Holland to keep diaries as a record of what went on under Nazi rule. Anne wrote: 'he said that they ought to make a collection of diaries and letters after the war. Of course they all made a rush at my diary immediately. Just imagine how interesting it would be if I were to publish a romance of the "Achterhuis", the title alone would be enough to make people think it was a detective story.'

Seven weeks later, on May 20, she put her idea into practice. She began to completely rewrite her diary from the beginning. She commented: 'At long last after a great deal of reflection I have started my "Achterhuis". In my head it is as good as finished, although it won't go as quickly as that really, if it ever comes off at all.'

For this second version, Anne used loose sheets of copy paper (probably because the helpers could no longer get exercise books for her). She made improvements in content and language, rewrote some entries, left others out. 'Dear Kitty' now became the heading of all entries from the beginning. To make it more creative, she replaced people's real names with fictional ones: her own family were renamed the 'Robins'; the Van Pels were called the 'Van Daans'; Fritz Pfeffer became 'Albert Dussel'; Jan and Miep Gies 'Henk and Miep van Santen'; Bep Voskuijl 'Elly Vossen'; Johannes Kleiman 'Simon Koophuis'; and Victor Kugler 'Harry Kraler'.

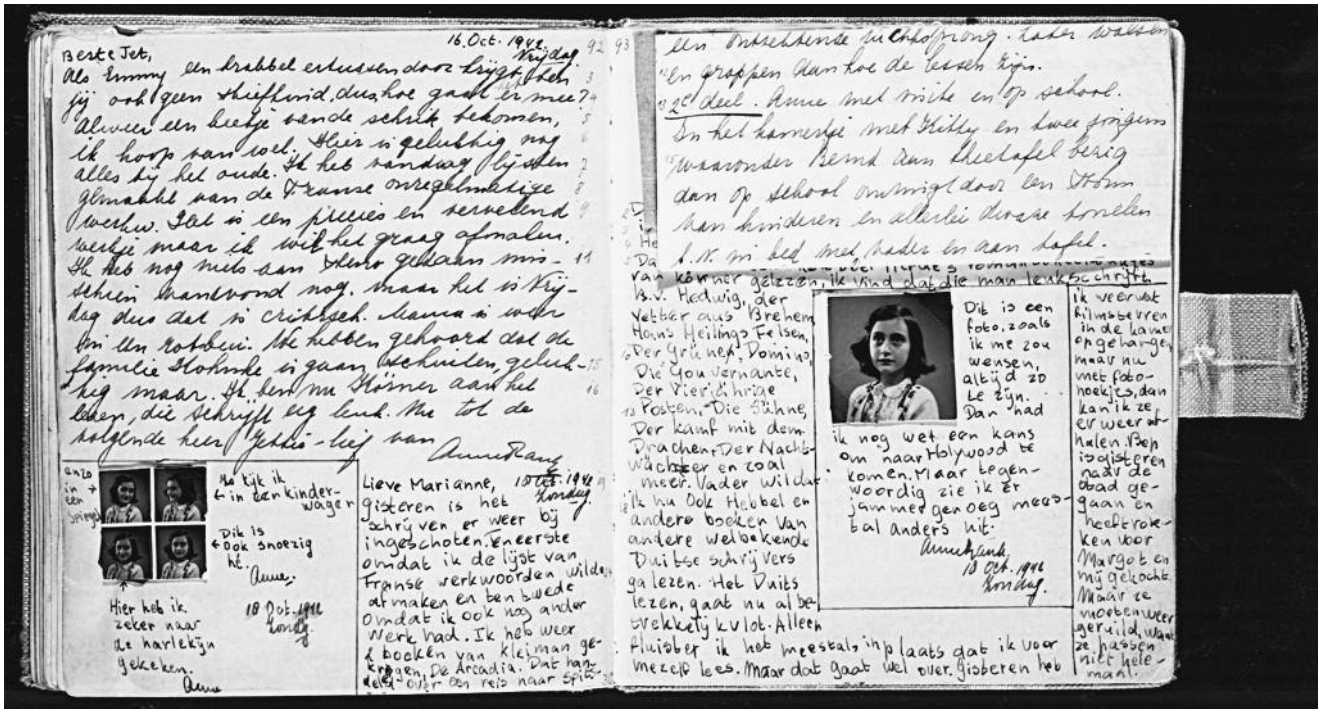
Anne never finished her second version, but she must have worked on it pretty constantly from May to August, for by the time the Germans arrested her on August 4, she had filled 300 sheets and progressed as far as March 29, 1944. All the while, she also continued to write in her first diary.

Avidly, the people in the annexe followed the course of the war. However, the high hopes raised by the surrender of Italy of September 8, 1943, were not fulfilled. In the autumn, Anne found herself frequently sinking into a gloomy and depressed mood.

From the beginning of 1944, her friendship with Peter grew more important, more important than her family, and she slowly fell in love with him. Even her father, whom she adored, was no longer her favourite. She talked more openly with Peter than with any of the others, and they spent a lot of time together in the loft. Her parents disapproved of this, and Otto had several serious talks about it with his daughter.

The Normandy invasion of June 6, 1944, caused great excitement in the annexe. Everything seemed to change and they all thought that the long-awaited liberation would soon be there. Six days later, Anne had her 15th birthday.

By now, her reflections were becoming more thoughtful. On July 15, she wrote: 'I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness, I hear the ever-approaching thunder, which will destroy us too, I can feel the sufferings of the millions and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty too will end, and that peace and tranquillity will return again. In the meantime, I must uphold my ideals, for perhaps the time will come when I shall be able to carry them out!'



Anne sometimes stuck photographs in her diary with comments written next to them. On October 18, she pasted in a picture of herself, an enlargement from her 1939 portrait sheet, and wrote next to it: 'This is a photo of me as I wished I looked all the time. Then I might still have a chance of getting to Hollywood but, at present, I'm afraid I usually look quite different.' On the opposite page are four other portraits from the 1939 series. One comment reads: 'This is also sweet, isn't it'. Note that for handwriting Anne used both a normal cursive style and a disconnected printing one. (AFF/AFS)

On the morning of Friday, August 4, 1944, a car stopped in front of Prinsengracht 263. A German uniformed policeman, SS-Oberscharführer Karl Silberbauer, and about half a dozen Dutch plain-clothes policemen got out and went up to the office on the first floor. It was an easy raid, as Silberbauer testified nearly 20 years later:

'There was a firm's warehouse on the ground floor, where we met a worker who, when asked by the Dutch policemen where the Jews were hidden, gestured with a finger up the stairs. We then went up to the office on the next floor, where we found one of the two heads of the company [Kugler]. The Dutch policemen immediately questioned this man, telling him to his face that there were Jews hidden in the building and that they had been denounced. . . . The head of the firm immediately became terribly nervous and went quite red in the face. Without any coercion, not one pistol was drawn, the man immediately got up and led us to the Frank family's hiding place. . . . He led us up the staircase to a small room one floor up. On entering the latter we could see a dresser or set of shelves against the end wall. To the right of it was a window. The head of the firm pointed to the piece of furniture. This was then pushed to one side and another staircase was revealed which led to the top storey. I drew my pistol and went up the stairs with the Dutch policemen.'

As Kugler related more than ten years later: 'I had to proceed them up the steps. The policemen followed me; I could feel their pistols in my back. But since the steps were only wide enough for a single person, I was the first to enter the Franks' room. Mrs Frank was standing at the table.'

Eight Jews in hiding was quite a catch for the Jew-hunting policemen. Silberbauer

Karl Silberbauer, who led the police raid on the annexe on August 4, 1944, and arrested those in hiding there. (J. Huf)

asked Otto Frank where they kept their cash and jewellery, and Frank pointed it out to him. Looking around, Silberbauer picked up the briefcase in which Anne kept her diaries and, spilling the contents onto the floor, he put the valuables in it.

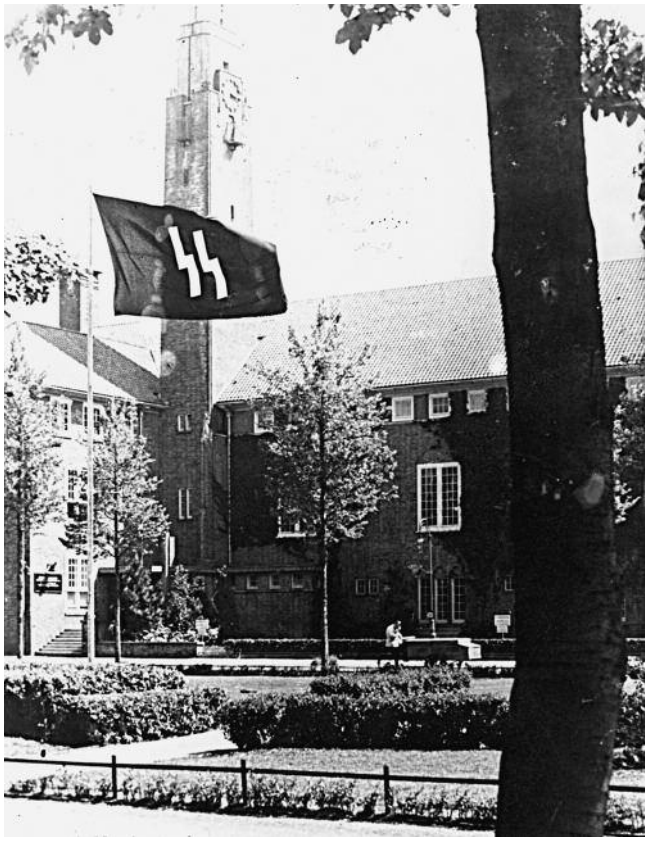
Silberbauer spotted an old army footlocker with Otto Frank's name and military rank stencilled on it, and asked to whom it belonged. When he learned that Frank was the owner and a reserve officer, he became almost polite.

One of the Dutch SD men went downstairs to phone for transport for such a large group. After a long wait, a covered truck arrived which brought the eight Jews and Kleiman and Kugler (who had both been arrested as well) to the Amsterdam headquarters of the Sicherheitspolizei und Sicherheitsdienst (Security Police and Security Service) in the Euterpestraat. The arrested Jewish persons were kept there one day, then transferred to the prison on Weteringschans, also in Amsterdam.

Kugler and Kleiman were sent on to the prison on Amstelveenseweg. On September 11, they were transferred without trial to the concentration camp at Amersfoort in the centre of Holland. Both survived. Kleiman was set free on the 18th because of bad health (he had had a gastric haemorrhage). Kugler was sent with other prisoners to Zwolle on the 26th to dig trenches for the Wehrmacht, being moved to Wageningen on December 30. On March 28, 1945, while being marched off to Germany, he managed to escape when his column was strafed near Zevenaar.

Miep Gies and Bep Voskuijl had not been arrested during the raid; for some reason, but mainly because they were women, the Germans thought them innocent. After the police had left, they went to inspect the now-empty annexe and, finding Anne's diaries and diary notes scattered around on the floor, collected everything. Miep locked the papers in her desk drawer, intending to return them to Anne if she would come back.

In the days following, Miep, in a brave attempt to buy off the Frank family, twice went to see Silberbauer at the Gestapo headquarters on Euterpestraat. Though he became less hostile when he discovered she was from Vienna too, it was all in vain.



After their arrest, the Franks, the Van Pels and Pfeffer, and helpers Kugler and Kleimann, were taken to the Amsterdam HQ of the Sicherheitspolizei und Sicherheitsdienst, which was located in a pair of requisitioned school buildings on Euterpestraat. Here was also the Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung (Central Agency for Jewish Emigration), the Gestapo office organising the deportation of the Dutch Jews. (RIOD)

Today, the Euterpestraat has been renamed Gerrit van der Veenstraat, after a famous Dutch resistance fighter. On November 26, 1944, the SD headquarters was the target of a low-level RAF attack, which destroyed the boys' school across the road (where the Zentralstelle was located) and seriously damaged the building in this picture (the girls' school). Today, it is a comprehensive school, also named after van der Veen.

On August 8, the eight arrested Jews were transferred to Westerbork camp. Located in the north-east of Holland, this had been built by the Dutch government to house Jewish refugees from Germany. Taken over by the German occupation authorities, they used it to concentrate Jews from every part of the Netherlands, but mostly from Amsterdam. Officially a 'labour camp' but in reality a transit station to the killing centres in Poland, Westerbork was run extremely efficient by the German commandant. Almost every week trains left the camp to the east: in all, between July 1942 and September 1944, 64 to Auschwitz, 19 to Sobibor, 8 to Bergen-Belsen, and 7 to Theresienstadt. (RIOD)

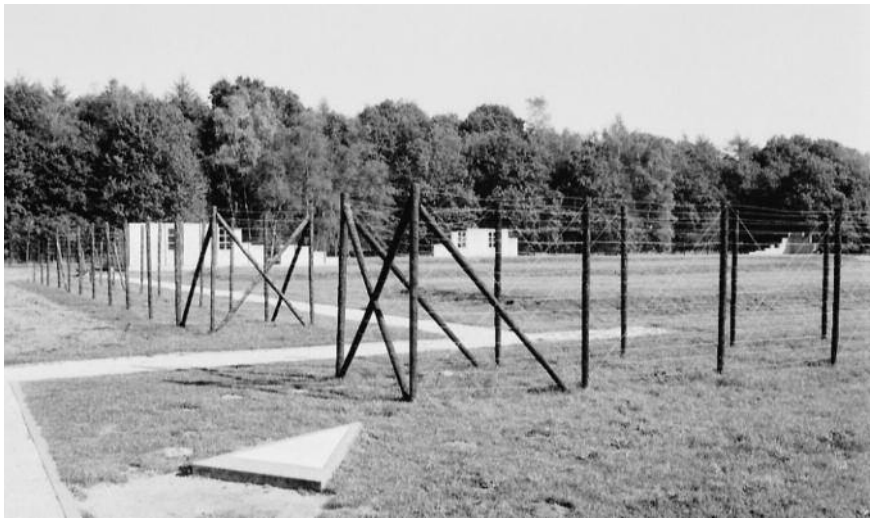
On August 8, four days after their arrest, the Frank and Van Pels families and Pfeffer were sent to the Westerbork transit camp, where they were put in the penal block.

Life in the camp, even under penalty, was very different from that in the secret annexe. In a way, it was a change for the good, for at last one did not have to stay indoors 24 hours a day. There are stories that Anne was quite happy there.

On September 3, 1944, all eight were included in the last train from Westerbork bound for Auschwitz. It carried 1,019 Jews: 498 men, 442 women and 79 children. After a journey of three days, immediately on arrival in the night of September 5/6, 549 of them, including all children below 15, were gassed. Those that survived the selection on the platform, came into the Birkenau camp. Separated from the men, the women and girls were put in Block 29 of the women's camp.

Anne and Margot were at Birkenau seven weeks. On October 28, they were separated from their mother and transferred to Bergen-Belsen, the 'exchange camp' on Lüneburg Heath (see *After the Battle* No. 89). Though life there had been relatively tolerable before, by the time the girls arrived, conditions in the camp had begun to deteriorate disastrously. There was not enough food or shelter for the thousands of inmates, the weather was terrible, and typhus was raging. After the large tents used to accommodate the women from Auschwitz had been destroyed by a night gale on November 7/8, they ended up in one of the shaky huts on the Appellplatz. At Belsen, Anne and Margot met some of the friends they had known in Amsterdam (like Anne's friend and schoolmate Hannah Goslar) or Westerbork. According to survivor accounts, the girls were very depressed and convinced that both their parents were dead. They had been assigned the worst place in their hut, the lower bunks near the door, where pneumonia was easily caught. Infected by typhus, naked except for a thin blanket, they could be seen fading away in their bunks. They died shortly after one another, Margot one or two days before Anne, probably in late February or early March. The exact dates are unknown. Nor is it known in which of the Belsen mass graves they were buried.

Nearly all the others who had been in hiding in the secret annexe perished before war's end. Mr. van Pels was gassed at Auschwitz a few weeks after his arrival. Fritz Pfeffer was transferred to Neuengamme camp in October and died there on December 20, 1944. Anne's mother, Edith Frank, perished at Auschwitz on January 6, 1945. Mrs. van Pels was transferred to Bergen-Belsen on November 24, to Buchenwald on February 6, 1945, and to Theresienstadt on April 9, where she died shortly after. Her son, Peter van Pels, was marched out of Auschwitz on January 16, 1945, in one of the murderous 'death marches'; he ended up in Mauthausen in Austria where he died on May 5, three days before the camp's liberation.

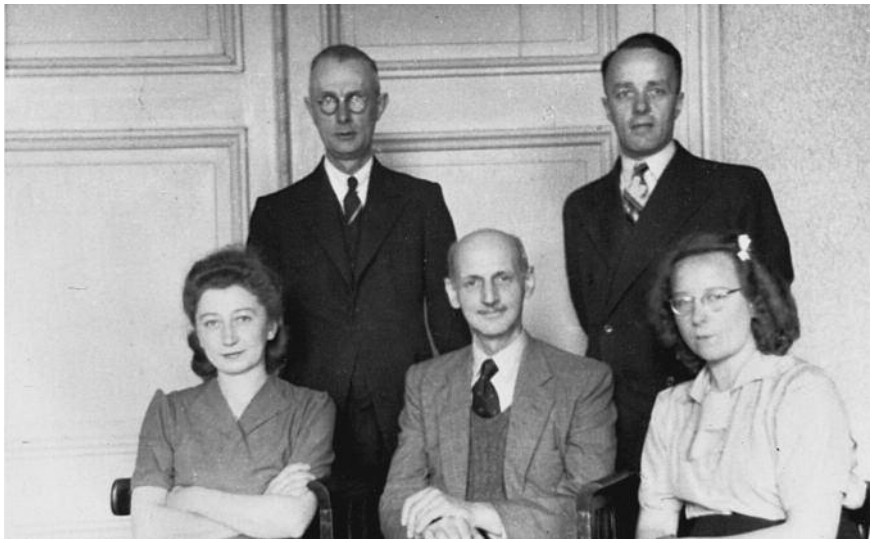


Except for the camp commander's villa near the former camp gate, nothing remains of the original Westerbork camp today, the whole site having been cleared in 1970-71. However, the open field in the woods where the camp lay is now an official memorial site, with several monuments in situ and a good museum nearby. This stylised reconstruction marks the area of the penal block where the Franks were put.

5 udentransport aus den Niederlanden – Lager Westerbork Blatt 7
3.September
amHäftlinge 194 .

301.	Angers	Isidor	30.4. 93	Kaufmann
302.	Angers	Leonard	15.6. 26	Landarbeiter
303.	Franco	Manfred	1.5. 05	Verleger
304.	Frank	Arthur	23.6. 81	Kaufmann
305.	Frank	Isaac	29.11.87	Installateur
306.	Frank	Margot	16.2. 26	ohne
307.	Frank	Otto	12.5. 89	Kaufmann
308.	Frank-Hollaender	Edith	16.1. 00	ohne
309.	Frank	Anneliese	12.6. 29	ohne
310.	v.Franck	Sara	27.4. 02	Zyklistin
311.	Franken	Abrahan	16.5. 96	Landarbeiter
312.	Franken-Weyand	Johanne	24.12.96	Landbauer
313.	Franken	Hermann	12.5. 34	ohne
314.	Franken	Louis	10.8. 17	Gaertner
315.	Franken	Rosaline	29.3. 27	Landbau
316.	Frankfort	Alex	14.11.19	Dr.i.d.Oekonomie
317.	Frankfort-Elsau	Regina	11.12.19	Apoth.-Ass.
318.	Frankfoort	Elias	22.10.98	Schneider

On September 3, all eight people from the secret annexe were included in a train transport to Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Franks were Nos. 306 to 309 on the official transport list which carried a total of 1,019 names. (RIOD)



Of the eight, only Otto Frank survived the death camps. After his return to Amsterdam in June 1945, he went to live with Jan and Miep Gies, and resumed his directorship of Pectacon. This picture, taken in October 1945, shows him with the four employees who had so courageously helped him and his family. L-R: Miep Gies, Johannes Kleimann, Otto Frank, Victor Kugler, and Bep Voskuijl. (AFF/AFS)

Only Otto Frank survived the war. One of the few not evacuated from Auschwitz, he was liberated there by the Red Army on January 27, 1945. Evacuated to Odessa on the Black Sea, he sailed on May 21 with the New Zealand ship *Monoway* to Marseille, arriving back in Amsterdam by train and lorry on June 3.

Having to completely rebuild his life, Otto went to stay with Jan and Miep Gies. He already knew that his wife had died, but he was still entertaining hopes that his daughters would return. Like many other survivors, he put an information request in a Dutch newspaper, the one about Margot and Anne appearing in *Het Vrije Volk* and *Het Parool* on August 1. Not long after, the Dutch Red Cross informed him that Anne and Margot had both died. Later, he received positive confirmation of this from Janny Brandes-Brilleslijper, a Dutch woman who had got to know the Franks at Westerbork and had been in the same hut with the girls at Belsen.

Miep Gies later wrote: 'Now Anne was not coming back for her diary. I took out all the papers, placing the little orange-checked diary on top, and carried everything into Mr Frank's office. Frank was sitting at his desk, his eyes murky with shock. I held out the diary and the papers to him. I said, "Here is your daughter Anne's legacy to you".'

Otto Frank had of course known about the existence of the diary, but now was the first time he read it and he was much impressed by his daughter. He started to copy 'the essentials', as he said later, for the benefit of relatives and friends who asked how life in hiding had been, and even translated some parts into German for his mother who lived in Switzerland. Later on, he wanted to publish the diary as a memorial to his daughter and to fulfil her wish to become a writer. He typed out a manuscript, using Anne's second, rewritten version and parts of her first version. He deleted a few passages: some of Anne's rude remarks about her mother (but not all), some unsympathetic comments about people who were now dead, and some duller details. He then gave this typescript to an old friend and radio-dramatist, Albert Cauvern, asking him to check it for grammatical errors and remove Germanisms.

But it was not easy to get the book published. The Dutch tried very hard to forget about the war and were not waiting for a war story by an unknown child. Several publishers refused the typescript. However, after a well-known professor in modern history, Jan Romein, who was a friend of a friend of Otto Frank, wrote a moving piece about it in *Het Parool* on April 3, 1946, the Amsterdam publishing-house Contact became interested. Editing it like any other manuscript, they made further changes in Anne's original text, both in punctuation and spelling and content. One of the directors took offence to Anne's graphic mentionings of sexual matters (her first monthly periods; an entry where she describes how she wanted to touch the breasts of her friend Jacque) and most of these were deleted, as were several other passages deemed to be of little interest. The original Dutch edition, *Het Achterhuis*, was published on June 25, 1947, in an edition of 1,500 copies. (A Dutch journal, *De Nieuwe Stem*, had already published five 'Fragment from the Diary of Anne Frank' the previous summer.) The book was not directly successful, but reviews were favourable: 'a richly talented child', 'a moving human document' and 'a miracle'.

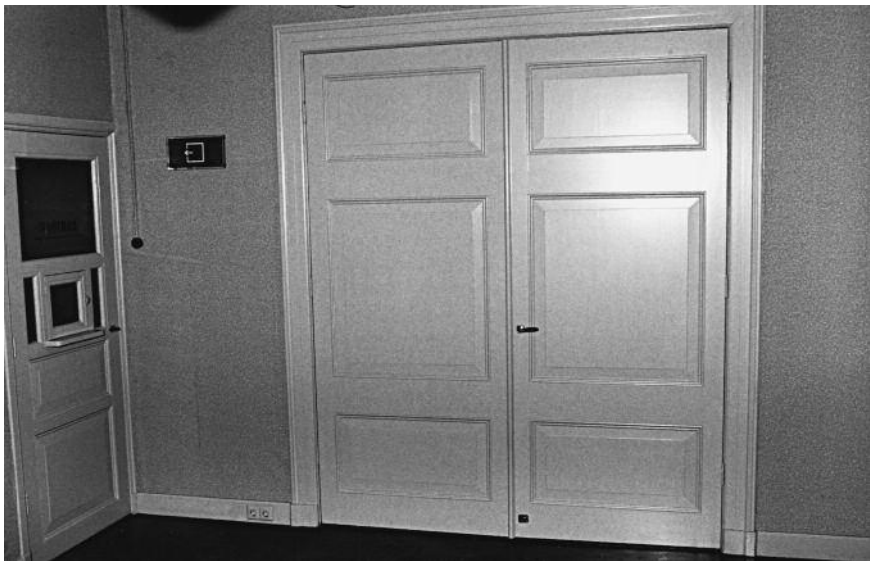
French and German editions appeared in 1950. The latter was a very stiff translation, done by a lady who had fled from Berlin to Holland before the war, but was too old to be able to honestly translate the youthful pages Anne had written. Worse than that, she altered the text at some places to make them more palatable to Germans. For example, where Anne wrote 'And indeed there is no greater hostility than exists between Germans and Jews' she changed that to 'And there is no greater hostility in the world than between *these* Germans and Jews.'

An English translation took some time. Ten publishers refused the book and it was only after two, Valentine, Mitchell & Co in Britain and Doubleday in the US, decided to share the cost of translating that the English edition finally appeared. Titled *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* it came out in June 1952.

Since then, Anne Franks's diary has grown to become a universal bestseller. Appealing to millions of readers everywhere, by now the book has been translated in over 50 languages and more than 25 million copies have been sold worldwide.

In 1950, the Jewish-American novelist Meyer Levin appeared on the scene, and he would play a controversial rôle for more than ten years. In 1944-45, Levin had been a war correspondent for the Overseas News Agency and had seen Dachau and Buchenwald, experiences which had led him to become a confirmed Zionist. In 1950, while in France, he read *Journal d'Anne Frank*, the French translation of *Het Achterhuis*, which impressed him so deeply that Anne Frank and the diary would come to dominate the rest of his life. (His 1973 book about it is titled *The Obsession*.) Levin contacted Otto Frank and, on learning about the problems to get the diary published in English, helped push on that front and also wrote a very positive review in the *New York Times Book Review*. In a second review, in *The National Jewish Post*, he emphasized that the book ought to be dramatised and made into a film. Not long afterwards he wrote a radio programme on Anne Frank.

In March 1952, Otto Frank had authorised Levin to act as his literary agent in the United States for a stage adaptation. Levin very much wanted to write the play himself and, besieging Otto Frank with persistent requests, he managed to get him to agree. At Levin's suggestion, Frank chose the stage producer Cheryl Crawford, who promised to produce Levin's dramatised version if it was usable. Levin set to work and gave his adaptation to Otto Frank who passed it on to Crawford. However, Crawford did not like Levin's play at all. Levin managed to get Frank to replace Crawford with Kermit



It was taken in the office on Prinsengracht, against the double doors separating the front room from the back one.

Bloomgarden, who had acquired a reputation with Arthur Miller productions, but Bloomgarden rejected the play as well. To escape from the impasse, an agreement was concluded between Levin and Frank on November 21, 1952, whereby Levin would put his version to 14 named stage producers; if all refused, he would accept defeat. None of them reacted positively, and Otto Frank thought that he had now got rid of Meyer Levin.

In late 1953, Bloomgarden asked the stagewriting couple Francis Goodrich-Hackett and Albert Hackett, who were also screenwriters for Paramount and MGM, to write a stage version. The Hacketts found it a difficult task, especially to keep the eight people in hiding 'present' throughout the play. It took eight versions before everyone, including Otto Frank, was satisfied.

The Diary of Anne Frank premiered at the Cort Theatre in New York on October 5, 1955. Directed by Garson Kanin, it featured Vienna-born actor Joseph Schildkraut as Otto Frank, while Suzan Strasberg, daughter of the famous Lee Strasberg, made her Broadway debut by playing Anne. The play was an immediate success (it would see over 1,000 performances) and won various awards, including the 1955 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. In Europe, the play was a hit too, first being staged in Göteborg in Sweden in August 1956. The Dutch premiere in Amsterdam on November 27 was a near-sacral event, with the Queen and her husband present and no applause at the end.

Meyer Levin, disappointed and still convinced that his version was much better than the Hackett adaption, in late 1956 instigated proceedings against Frank and Bloomgarden in the Supreme Court of the State of New York, accusing them of fraud and breach of contract, and claiming that the Hacketts had made use of his material without permission or paying royalties. Furthermore, he wanted to be able to bring out *his* version in Israel, something which he said Frank had verbally agreed to before the contract of November 1952. He demanded $200,000 in compensation. A court jury judged that Levin's claim about the use of his material was founded and that Frank and Bloomgarden should therefore pay him $50,000. However, Judge Samuel Coleman disagreed with the jury and overruled the verdict, ordaining that a committee from the American Jewish community should arrange a compromise. This was reached in October 1959: in return for $15,000, to be paid by Otto Frank, Levin dropped all claims to royalties and transferred all his rights to any adaptation of the diary to Frank.

The discussion whether Meyer Levin (who died in Israel in 1981) was right after all has still not abated today. In his eyes, the Goodrich-Hackett play did not pay enough attention to the 'Jewishness' of the Frank family; their version was just a tragedy in history, without the centuries of anti-semitism. Anne's famous words at the end of the play — 'In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart' — made it a universal tragedy, so everybody, Jew and gentile, could feel compassion. Levin had a point. On the other hand, there is not much 'Jewishness' in Anne's diary; not surprisingly, for the Franks were after all a very assimilated family.

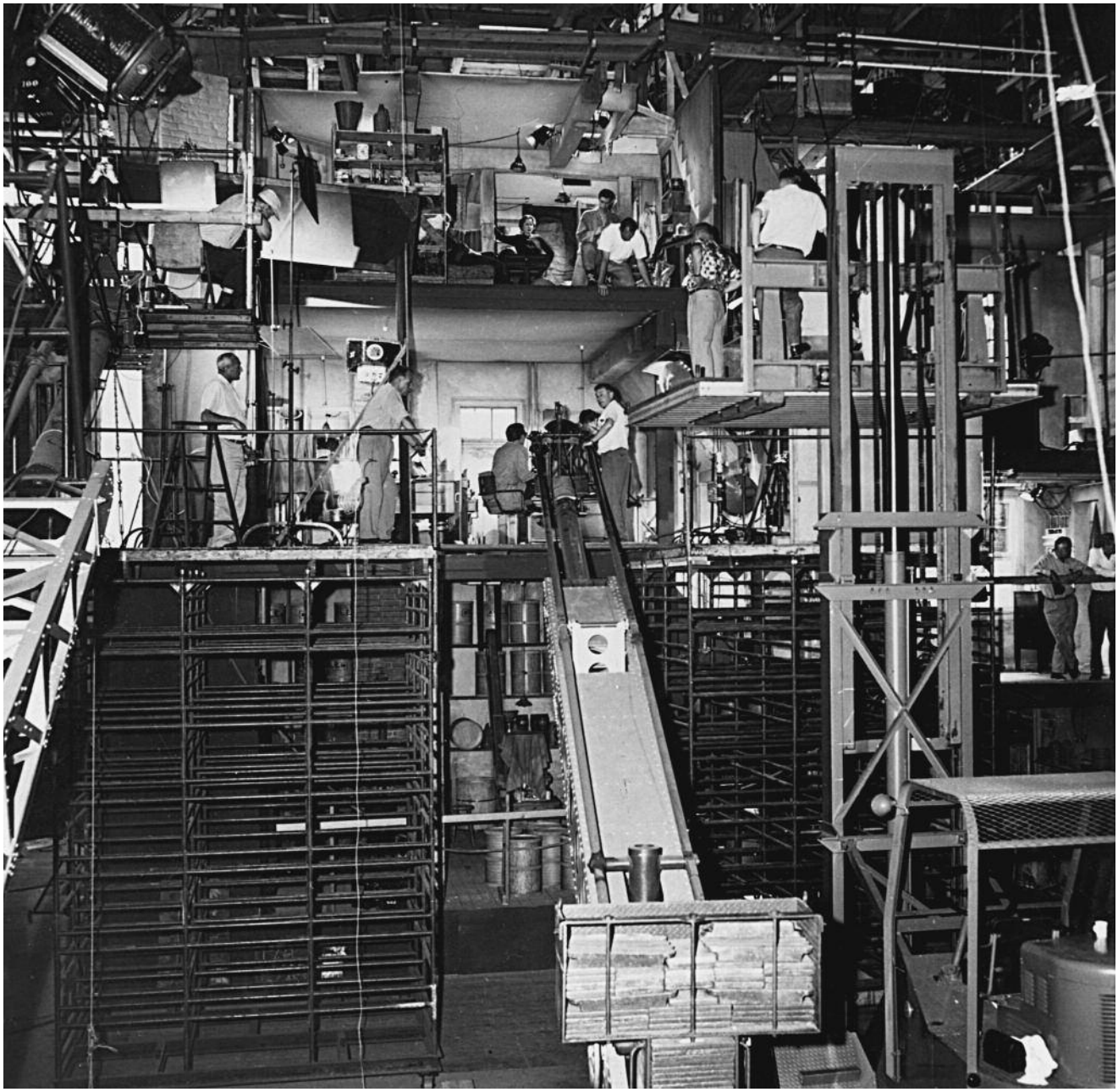
With Anne's published diary a worldwide bestseller, and the stage adaption a Broadway hit, in 1956 20th Century Fox Studios decided to turn the play into a movie. One of the most difficult problems was to find a suitable actress to play Anne, director George Stevens screen-testing hundreds of girls, even travelling to the Netherlands hoping to find a suitable candidate there. In all, Fox Studios received applications from 10,224 girls. Audrey Hepburn had been considered for the role but, at 30, was clearly too old for the part, and she had serious reservations about it herself, because it evoked painful memories of her own youth in Holland under Nazi rule. In the end, Stevens selected an American photo model without any film experience, 19-year-old Millie Perkins. Here, Stevens (centre) is seen directing Perkins in a screen test with actor Richard Trask (who did not play in the final film). (BFI)

Twentieth Century Fox had purchased the film rights to the play in the autumn of 1956, and contracted George Stevens to direct and produce the movie. Goodrich and Hackett were to write the screenplay, the agreement being that it would not be much different from the stage version. Although the conflict with Levin had not yet been resolved, Stevens started preparations in 1957.

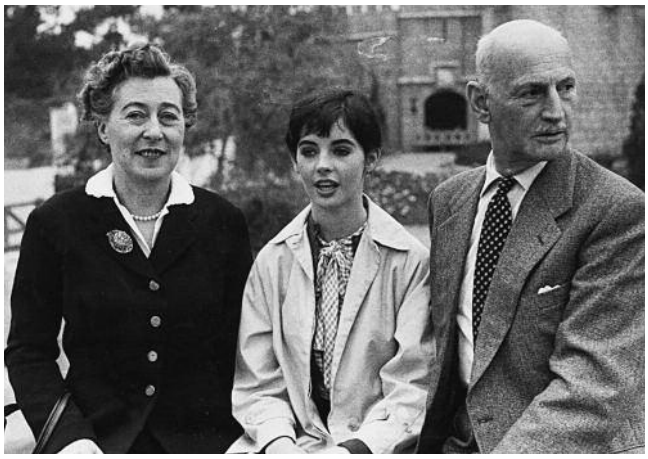
A ripple of excitement ran through the Netherlands with the news that an American company was coming to shoot a film in Amsterdam. Over 10,000 girls, many of them Dutch, wrote letters applying for the rôle of Anne. A talent scout came to Amsterdam at the end of 1957 to screen-test some 70 of them, the Dutch press even reporting that a Dutch candidate, a young half-Jewish ballet dancer, had been selected. It therefore came as a blow in Holland when it was announced that 19-year-old American model Millie Perkins had been chosen to play Anne. Joseph Schildkraut was again to play Otto, and Gusti Huber his wife.

At the press conference where the selection of Perkins was announced, 20th Century Fox's publicity department had put up two very appropriate enlargements, one of the portrait which Anne had stuck in her diary on October 18, 1942 (see page 18) and one of her accompanying entry: 'This is a photo of me as I wished I looked all the time. Then I might still have a chance of getting to Hollywood'. (BFI)

Right: **Perkins pictured with the scale model of the film set. The art directors — Lyle R. Wheeler, George W. Davis, Walter M. Scott and Stuart A. Reiss (who won an Oscar for their joint work) — had designed a four-storey-high structure with an open wall at one end. It was not an exact replica of the real house, design and lay-out being dictated more by the requirements of filming than by historical authenticity. For example, the Franks' room on the second floor was made the main room and general living area, whereas in real life the Van Daans' room on the third floor had been used as such. Also, the stairs to the third floor — in the real house in the corridor — was put inside the main room. And Peter's room — actually on the third floor — was put on the second and given an attic-type window.** *Below:* **The elaborate film set allowed the director to make vivid crane shots, for example moving up from the warehouse past the office space to the secret hiding-place (which effectively illustrated the need for those in hiding there to walk silently and make no noise), or from the main room to the Van Daans' room above. (BFI)**

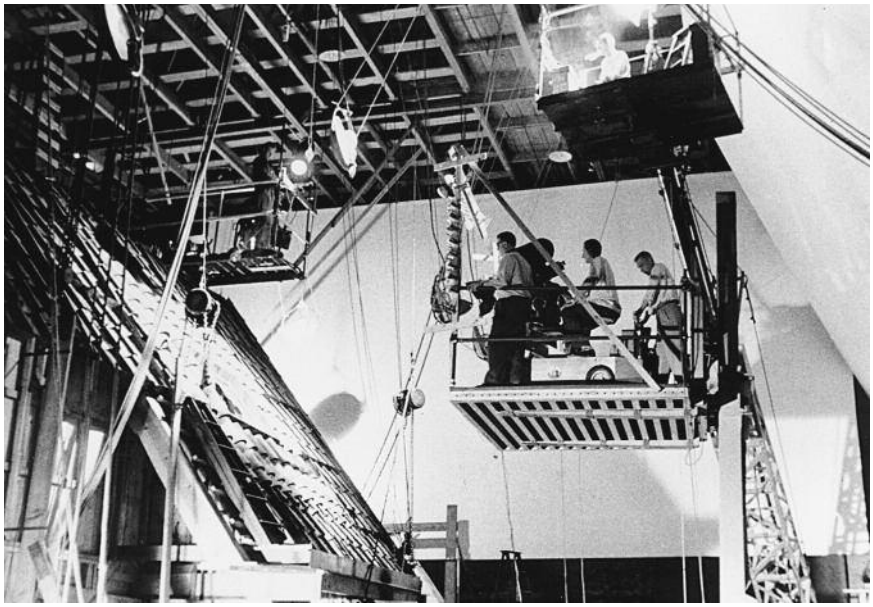


Right: **The cast and director during a script-reading session. Round the table, anti-clockwise from George Stevens' empty chair are: Richard Beymer (Peter), George Stevens Jr (Stevens' son and assistant director), George Stevens Sr, Diane Baker (Margot), Millie Perkins (Anne — only her hand is visible), Joseph Schildkraut (Mr Frank), Gusti Huber (Mrs Frank), Lou Jacobi (Mr van Daan), Shelley Winters (Mrs van Daan), and Ed Wynn (Mr Dussel). The last man is a production assistant. Absent are Douglas Spencer (Mr Kraler) and Dody Heath (Miep). Note the scale model of the set and the large wall portraits of Anne and Perkins. George Stevens had been in the movie industry since the 1920s and had built up a solid reputation as a director of entertainment and serious drama films. In 1944-45, he had led a special US Army film unit in the European theatre, during which time he himself had shot rare colour footage with his private camera. To prepare his actors for the coming movie, he had first showed them the footage he had taken at the liberation of Dachau concentration camp. (BFI)**



Left: **Before the shooting started, Perkins met with Otto Frank and Elfriede Geiringer, Otto's second wife whom he had married in 1953 (she died on October 1, 1998). (AFF/AFS)** *Right:* **The scene of the arrival of the Franks and Van Daans in the secret annexe. Note the crates, boxes and suitcases standing around. L-R: Huber (Mrs Frank), Schildkraut (Mr Frank), Douglas Spencer (Kraler), Winters (Mrs van Daan). In her 1989 autobiography, Shelley Winters recalled: 'One day about four months into the shooting, George Stevens announced to us that we were having lunch with Mr. Otto Frank, the real Anne's father. He had never seen a production of the play; it would have been too difficult a thing for him to do. In fact it was very courageous for him to come and watch some of the filming that afternoon. We all had lunch with him in our costumes, shabby, smelly wartime Dutch clothes. He looked around the table at all the actors who were portraying his friends and family. He was trembling and had tears in his eyes.' Her rôle in the film won Shelley Winters the 1959 Oscar for best supporting act. (BFI)**

Left: **Family scene in the main room. L-R: Beymer, Huber, Baker, Schildkraut, Perkins.** *Right:* **A tense moment in the film, as a watchman (played by Frank Tweddle) and two 'green policemen' (Del Erickson and Robert Boon — the German Ordnungspolizei was known as 'Grüne Polizei' from the colour of their uniforms) inspect the house for burglars. (BFI)**



Stevens preparing an exterior shot of the attic window, for the scene in which those in hiding watch a night bombing raid on Amsterdam. (BFI)

Anne (Perkins) and Peter (Beymer) having one of their private moments together in the attic. Actor Richard Beymer was later to star in *West Side Story* and in *The Longest Day* (in which he portrayed 82nd Airborne paratrooper 'Dutch' Schultz). (BFI)

Shooting in Hollywood lasted almost six months. Like with the stage production, Stevens had great difficulty filming the story protagonists in the confined space of the secret annexe. Moreover, 20th Century Fox had a binding contract with CinemaScope, Hollywood's answer to television, but this wide and technically-imperfect format led to distortion in close-ups. Stevens' solution was to emphasize the vertical beams in the rear annexe, so that they functioned as an extra frame. Part of the set was mounted on springs, so that the room could shake in the bombing scene. The movie made optimal use of sound — marching Germans, martial music, gun-fire, the chimes of the Westertoren church — to link the indoor story with the outside world.

Meanwhile, the director's son, George Stevens Jr, filmed the outdoor scenes on location in Amsterdam. A pilot version of the film was given a sneak preview in the United States. The viewers' reaction to seeing Anne in a concentration camp was not convincing enough to retain the scene in the film.

The Diary of Anne Frank premiered in New York on March 18, 1959. In the Netherlands, there had been fears that 'Hollywood' would not do justice to Anne Frank, but Dutch reports from the US were positive. 'They have tried sincerely to act in the spirit of the young girl', one reviewer wrote. The European premiere was in Amsterdam on April 6, 1959, again with royalty present and everybody dressed in black. The movie received three Academy Awards, for best supporting act (Shelley Winters), B/W cinematography, and art direction. (Its main competitor, *Ben Hur*, won 11 Oscars.)

As 99 per cent of the plot takes place indoors, most of the film could be shot in the Hollywood studios, but to enhance authenticity Stevens decided to shoot the few outdoor scenes on location in Amsterdam. The production of a big-budget Hollywood movie was something quite unusual in the Netherlands of the 1950s and the shooting in July 1958 drew much attention from the population and the press. *Centre:* **To illustrate the fate of the Jewish population under Nazi occupation, the script called for a winter scene of rounded-up Jews being marched off under guard. To shoot a winter scene in the middle of summer, the producers initially tried 15 tons of artificial snow brought from Germany but, when this failed to produce the desired result, they used a mixture of salt and gypsum — features which did not cease to amaze the Dutch press and public. The plan to dig up a large number of trees and temporarily replace them with artificial, leafless trees for the winter scenes was not put into operation. In the end, the Amsterdam Parks Department was only able to supply a single big, leafless tree, and even that made the papers. (BFI)** *Right:* **Though the film suggests the scene takes place on Prinsengracht, it was actually shot in Staalstraat, a suitably picturesque street, but located over half a mile away at the other end of the city centre.**

Twice after the war, Dutch justice tried to establish who had betrayed the secret annexe in 1944. From the behaviour of the arrest team, it was obvious that they had had preknowledge of the hiding place. One of the warehouse workers, Willem van Maaren, was a suspect, but a first police inquiry, in 1948, produced insufficient evidence for a trial. The second inquiry took place in 1963-64, after Simon Wiesenthal had tracked down Karl Silberbauer in Vienna (he was still working as a policeman). During interrogation, Silberbauer confirmed that the Sicherheitsdienst had indeed been tipped off by a telephone call, but he could not give a name, as the call had been received by his superior, Kriminalinspektor Julius Dettmann, who had committed suicide in 1945. Van Maaren's guilt could never be proven (he died in 1971), and the question remains unsolved to this day.

On his return in 1945, Otto Frank had resumed his directorship (with Kleiman) of Pectacon. In 1948, he also became commissioner of Gies & Co. For legal reasons (since it was seen as a former German company), the Dutch government did not grant him return of Opekta until 1950.

In 1952, Otto moved to Basel in Switzerland, to be nearer his mother and sister. A year later, in November 1953, he married Elfriede Geiringer-Markovits, a widow he had met on his journey back from Auschwitz. Before the war, she and her family had fled from Vienna to Holland. Her husband and son had been killed by the Nazis; she and a daughter had survived at Auschwitz. They had known the Frank family in Amsterdam and after she and Otto had met again in Amsterdam they decided to marry.

Though Otto still had his businesses in Amsterdam, he was now dedicating more and more of his time to the diary of his daughter, and in 1953 he laid down his directorships. The following year, he decided to sell the building at Prinsengracht 263. It was in a bad shape and the new owners wanted to demolish it and replace it with something new.

However, with the success of Anne's diary, people who had read the book had begun to visit the house, where they were shown around by Kleiman. By 1955, the idea had sprung up to preserve the building and turn it into a museum. A group of people successfully campaigned for a stop to the demolition plans. A special foundation, the Anne Frank Stichting, was set up, and in 1957 the new owner donated the building to this foundation. Fundraising was started and support came in from all over the world.

The foundation's main aim was to change the house into a museum and present the ideals of Anne Frank to the world. Anne's message — 'People are good at heart' — was humanistic, and appealed to everybody, irrespective of political denomination or religious belief. The foundation wanted to promote reconciliation between people and the need to execute the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, not all Jews were happy with the focus on one 'innocent child'; others felt that Anne's diary, ending as it does before her arrest and deportation, did not give any real vision of the holocaust.

The Anne Frank House officially opened to the public on May 3, 1960. Around the corner, an International Youth Centre was set up where summer seminars were organised. The number of visitors grew rapidly, tens of thousands finding their way to the Prinsengracht.

In the late 1960s, affected by the spirit of the era, the Anne Frank House began to move away from its historical background and focus more on the general struggle against prejudice, racism, fascism and antisemitism. More and more, the museum's activities began to reflect the political issues of the time. The foundation organised workshops on human rights, against the Vietnam war or Apartheid, or discussions on Israel and the Palestinian question. Temporary exhibitions dealt with '2,000 Years of Antisemitism' or 'The ultra-right in Europe'.

Otto Frank (right) with Jan and Miep Gies pictured on May 3, 1960, on the occasion of the official opening of the Anne Frank House as a museum. (AFF/AFS)

The new line was not without controversy. The foundation's Board became worried that the museum staff had become too radical. South Africa protested against an exhibition on Nazis in their country. There were even press reports in Holland and Israel that Anne Frank had now fallen in the hands of the ultra-left. Though the matter was also discussed abroad, it was all very much an inner-Dutch affair, of little or no relevance to the thousands of visitors who continued to flock to the museum.

In 1970-71, the Anne Frank House was closed for a few months to undergo restoration and alteration, the latter having become necessary in order to safely cope with the masses of visitors to the house. Until then, everyone had to climb up, and come down, the same narrow stairs to the annexe, which caused much inconvenience and not a few accidents. From now on, a new passage and a one-way route enabled visitors to make a safe circuit through the small rooms where the events of 1942-44 had taken place.

In the 1980s, the Anne Frank Foundation went abroad, in the first place to the United States. Between 1985 and 1990, the travelling exhibition 'Anne Frank in the World' attracted more than a million visitors there. Since then, it has travelled all over the world, from South Africa to Japan, from South America to Eastern Europe. By now, it has been seen by nearly 7 million people in over 30 countries. In 1997, over 700,000 people visited the Anne Frank House.

Unfortunately, because of its worldwide fame and status, Anne Frank's diary has for many years been the target of neo-Nazi and antisemitic attacks. These hate groups deny the authenticity of the diary, claiming it to be a forgery. More particular, and making gross misuse of the 1956-59 legal controversy around the stage play, they say the diary was

Since then, several millions have visited the building on Prinsengracht and seen the place made famous by Anne's diary. An average day in the tourist season sees long queues outside the premises waiting to get in. This is a Tuesday in July 1998.

written by Meyer Levin whom they say was paid $50,000 to do so by Otto Frank — a grotesque distortion of the actual court case (even the amount of money is wrong) and of course utter nonsense: Anne's creation was first printed in 1947, five years before Levin ever got involved.

The earliest attacks on the authenticity of the diary were produced by neo-Nazis in Sweden in 1957. Since then, the same accusations and lies have been rewritten again and again, and even sometimes received considerable press attention. In January 1959, Otto Frank instigated legal action against two Germans who had repeated the claim of forgery, Lothar Stielau and Heinrich Buddeberg, but after two years of legal proceedings the case ended with an unsatisfactory settlement.

In the 1970s, the attacks came mainly from the so-called 'revisionists', people who deny the existence of the gas chambers in the death camps or that the genocide of the Jews ever took place. Their writings have the look and the feel — but not the substance — of scientific research. In the United States, the so-called Institute for Historical Review became notorious for promoting revisionist 'research'. In Germany, British right-wing historian David Irving was forced by Otto Frank in 1975 to remove the following sentence from the German edition of his book *Hitler and his Generals*: 'Many forgeries are on record, as for instance those of the "Diary of Anne Frank" (in this case a civil lawsuit brought by a New York scriptwriter has proved that he wrote it in collaboration with the girl's father).' In France, Robert Faurisson, of the Department of Literature at the University of Lyons, in 1980 published a notorious book titled *Le Journal d'Anne Frank est-il authentique?* which resorted to statements by unverifiable witnesses and other distortions to 'prove' that it was not. Despite litigations, attacks on the diary continue to this day.

On August 19, 1980, Otto Frank died at his home in Birsfelden near Basel in Switzerland, aged 91. In his Will, he bequeathed Anne's original diaries and notes to the Dutch Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (State Institute for War Documentation) in Amsterdam, where the present writer is a staff researcher.

The arrival of the famous manuscripts at the institute the following November was a real media event. Television teams from all over the world visited the institute to film the handwritten lines and to ask us what we intended to do with it.

The institute soon decided that it should publish Anne's diaries unabridged in a complete edition, for two reasons: because they were an important historical source, and in order to stifle once and for all the growing number of published slurs on their authenticity. Together with colleague staff researcher Gerrold van der Stroom, I formed the editorial team. Our research was threefold.

Firstly, Anne's handwritten texts — the 450 pages in the autograph album and two school exercise books (her first diary) and the 300 loose sheets (her second version) — were typed out and checked. Errors she or others had improved with ink or pencil, were annotated in footnotes. As already said, the two versions differ considerably. Otto Frank, who could not publish two diaries, had used her second version and parts of the first to compose *Het Achterhuis*. Though Frank never denied it, the fact that there existed two original versions was not commonly known. In the complete edition, the two versions and the one published as *Het Achterhuis* were printed one above the other on each page, this in order to enable easy comparison.

Secondly, we called upon experts at the State Forensic Science Laboratory of the Ministry of Justice to examine the handwriting, the ink, the paper, etc of the original diaries. Anne's handwriting was analysed, and compared with other specimens of her writing and writings by numerous of her classmates. The experts took into account that Anne used both a normal cursive lettering and a disconnected printing style. Samples of her writing were included in our book to support their conclusion that the diary was indeed written by Anne Frank alone.

In May 1986, the Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation published *De Dagboeken van Anne Frank*, a scholarly volume which for the first time released the full texts of Anne's original diary handwritings. Fully annotated by the two editors — David Barnouw (our author) and Gerrold van der Stroom — and accompanied by historical introductions written by them and the institute's director Harry Paape, the volume immediately established itself as the definitive textbook on the subject. A planned new edition will include the five previously unknown diary pages which surfaced in August 1998. L-R: David Barnouw, Harry Paape and Gerrold van der Stroom at the presentation of the Dutch edition. (via Barnouw)

The glue and fibres used in the binding of the diaries were analysed by infra-red spectrometry, and found to be of a type in common use in 1942-44, a different kind of synthetic glue only coming into use after 1950. Anne mainly used a grey-blue ink for fountain pens with a strong iron content, a type in general usage in the 1940. Inks with much less or no iron at all were only introduced in 1950. Together, this clearly established that the paper, ink and glue in the diary and the loose sheets all existed in the early 1940s, before Anne and her family were betrayed, and certainly before 1950. A summary of the Forensic Laboratory's report by H. J. J. Hardy was included in our book.

Finally, we prepared an extensive introduction. Harry Paape, at that time the institute's Director, wrote detailed chapters on the Frank family in Frankfurt and Amsterdam, and Anne's father after the war; on the arresting raid; on the question of who betrayed the secret annexe; and on the victims' incarceration and deportation. Gerald van der Stroom wrote a chapter on the diary's publication history, the differences between the original manuscripts and the published version, and between the latter and its German, French and English translations. I myself wrote chapters on the Goodrich-Hackett play and the attacks on the diaries' authenticity.

The result, a 714-page volume titled *De Dagboeken van Anne Frank*, was published in 1986. Translations appeared in Germany (1988), France, Britain, the United States (1989) and even Japan (1995). The English edition, *The Diary of Anne Frank. The Critical Edition* was published by Doubleday in the US and Viking in Britain. Everywhere, it was hailed as the definitive textbook on Anne Frank and the diary.

There was one last sequel. The copyright of the diaries lies with the Anne Frank Fund in Basel in Switzerland. In view of the approaching expiry of the 50-years' copyright protection of the diaries (the rule then being that a text was free 50 years after the death of the writer, or after the publication date), the Fund's trustees asked Mirjam Pressler, the German translator of the *Critical Edition*, to edit a new version of *Het Achterhuis*, incorporating hitherto unknown parts. It appeared in 1991, thus securing the revenues for the Anne Frank Fund for another 50 years. The English translation, titled *The Diary of Anne Frank. The definitive edition*, came out in the US in 1995 and in the UK in 1997.

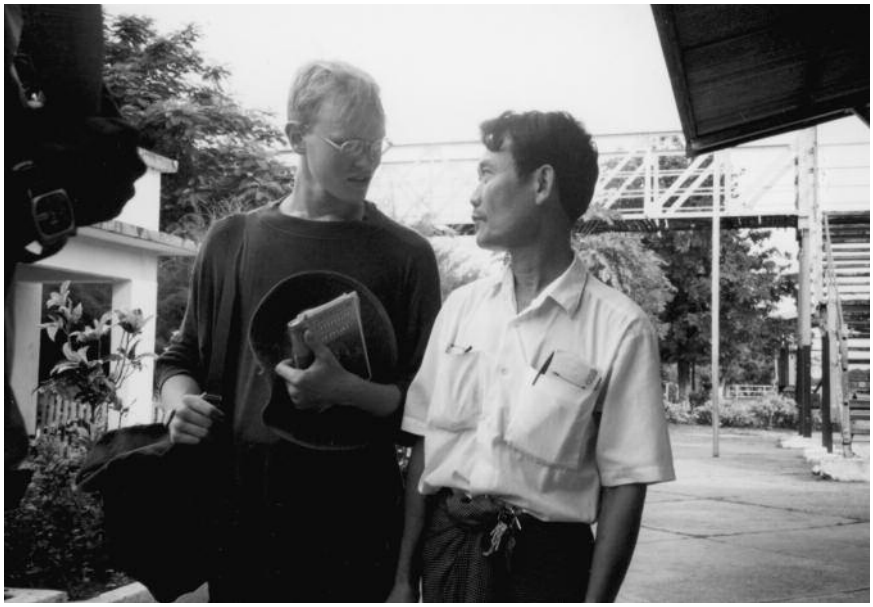
Of the helpers of the secret annexe, Johannes Kleiman stayed director of Pectacon in Amsterdam until his death on January 30, 1959. Victor Kugler emigrated to Canada in 1955 and died in Toronto in December 16, 1981. Bep Voskuijl died in Amsterdam on May 6, 1983, and Jan Gies on January 26, 1993. Miep Gies still lives there today.

Statue of Anne by Mari Andriessen. Unveiled in 1977 on Westermarkt, around the corner from Prinsengracht 263

BURMA 1945: THE ROAD TO RANGOON

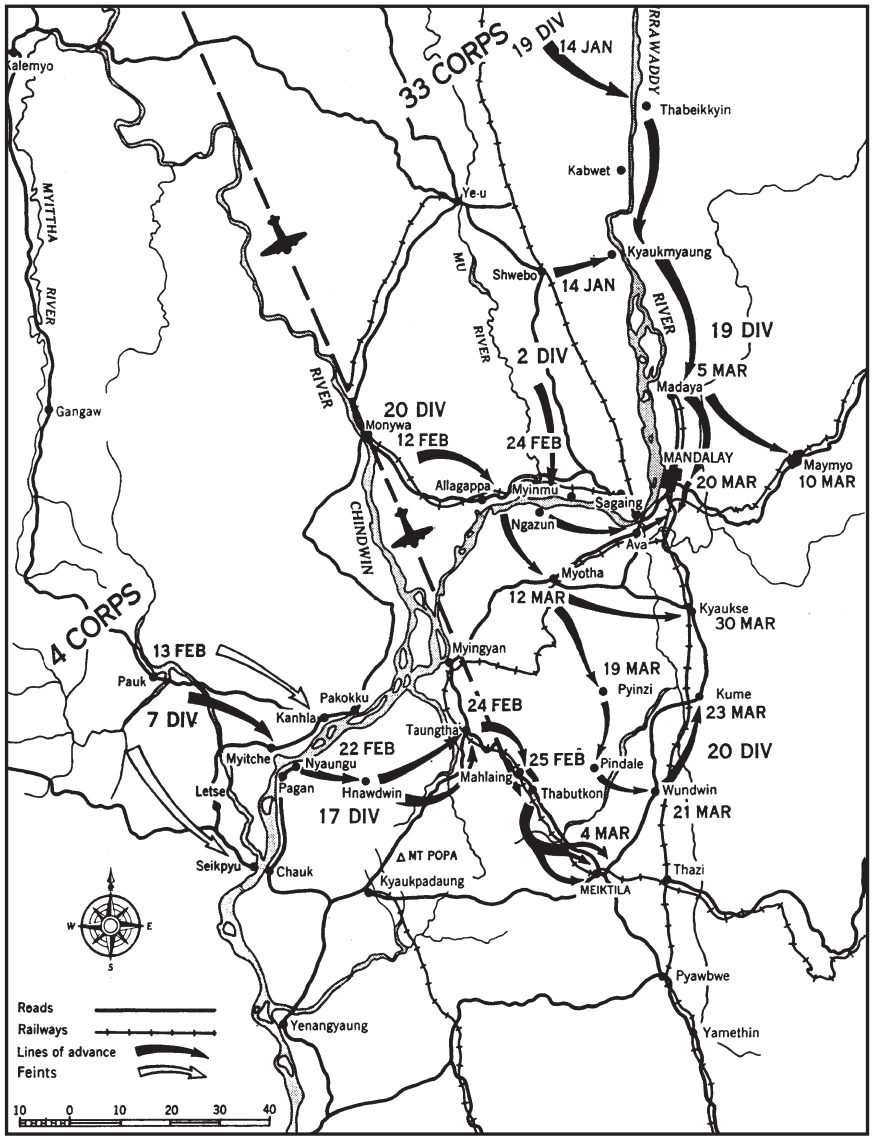
By Elliott Smock

By the beginning of 1945, at long last the Allied advance on three fronts across Burma had broken through the stubborn Japanese defences and by February, IV and XXXIII Corps of General Sir William Slim's Fourteenth Army, which had been advancing on the Central Front, reached the Irrawaddy river. This presented big problems to a big force as the Irrawaddy — over a mile wide at many points — was indeed a formidable obstruction. Slim made the best of a bad situation and used this break in momentum to allow his units and supplies to reach the forward forces at the mighty river's edge. By this time, the 19th Indian Division (Major-General Pete Rees) of XXXIII Corps was already holding two bridgeheads on the Irrawaddy's east bank having slipped across the river at two places upstream from Mandalay earlier. Slim's plan was a classic diversionary one. With Mandalay a mere 100 miles distant from Naung-oo (also known as Nyaungu), it was feasible that the Japanese would think that this — Burma's second city — was to be the objective of the Fourteenth Army. This, of course, was just what Slim wanted the Japanese to think as his plan relied on the removal of the Japanese forces from Meiktila to support the garrisons at Mandalay. He could then sweep down on Meiktila and thenceforth down to Rangoon making the Japanese Empire's hold on Burma as short as possible. But first the Irrawaddy had to be crossed.



Top: **On the legendary 'Road to Mandalay'. Burma had been under Japanese occupation since 1942 when General Sir William Slim's Fourteenth Army began its 400-mile advance to the capital Rangoon in February 1945. (IWM)** *Right:* **The author consults with the station master at Yamethin station in central Burma for permission to take a photograph. Elliott Smock is an undergraduate at King's College, London, studying Biomedical Science. Amongst his many interests is the air war in Burma which led him there in the first place. During his one month stay in 1996, his attempts to search for lost Hurricanes in her jungles were thwarted on several occasions by the country's security forces.**

Burma has never been a particularly easy country to travel through and, even today, 99 per cent of Westerners come in by air. The country is flanked in the north and east by mountains — the Himalayas start their long upward climb here — and, to the north-west from the border with Bangladesh (back in the Second World War still part of India) stretches a vast tract of malaria-infested swamp, the Arakan, which follows the coastline southwards. Rolling plains fill out the central part of the country; areas with little or no shade provide scant relief from the merciless summer sun, the long tracts of road diffuse into dust traps which the monsoon transforms into swampy tracks. The battle for central Burma by the so-called 'forgotten army' took place during the first three months of 1945 with forces approaching Mandalay from north and south.

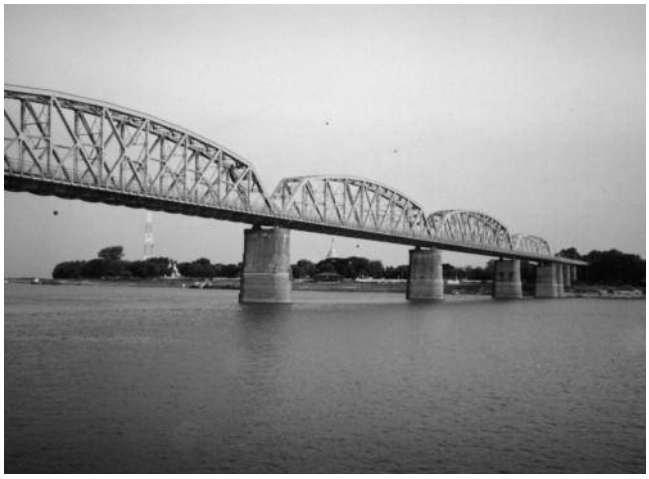


BEACH HEAD ACROSS THE IRRAWADDY

The bulk of Slim's forces were to land on the east bank at Naung-oo, the crossings by IV Corps being staggered with the 28th East African Brigade taking pressure off the main force by simulating a crossing 40 miles downstream, foxing the Japanese by drawing the one force that was a potential threat away from the true river crossing.

Upstream from Naung-oo, the leading elements of the 114th Brigade (7th Indian Division), which had been moving up to Pakokku, made contact with the Japanese who had dug in on the hill overlooking the road junction at Kanhla. Here, the Japanese lived up to their reputation as fierce fighters for it took three days to take these positions and only then with the support of tanks.

On the night of February 12/13, the 20th Indian Division crossed the Irrawaddy, 50 miles up river from Pakokku, the 19th Division, whose objective *was* Mandalay, having broken out from its bridgehead on the 11th, by the capture of Singu, made possible by the light and medium tanks that General Rees had managed to send across the Irrawaddy. The 19th Division's 64th Brigade, which had a bias of armoured vehicles, moved up into the hills and the Japanese who reacted aggressively, destroyed two and badly damaged a further two tanks. All the while, the troops had to endure the intolerable sun and, as the days rolled by, the weather would get even hotter, peaking in April when the central plains turn Burma into a powdered dustbowl. However, despite all these trials and tribulations, the 64th Brigade triumphed and by March 2 the 19th Division was on the legendary 'road to Mandalay'.



The country is cut by three principal rivers, from east to west: the Chindwin, which provided the Allies with a geographical refuge from the Japanese during the earlier Burma campaigns; the Irrawaddy, the largest of the three rivers which snakes through the northern jungles on its way down from the Himalayas, brushing past Mandalay and Rangoon in its vastness before meeting the sea in the Gulf of Martaban; and finally the Salween. The latter is China's gift to Burma and it defines her eastern extremities until it, too, meets the sea at the Gulf of Martaban (known as Mu Tamar in Burmese). However, it was the Irrawaddy which was to prove the first major obstacle to be breached at the start of the Allies' third campaign in Burma. *Left:* **In the east, the Ava Bridge formed the railway link between Sagaing and Mandalay before it was severed by the British during their retreat in 1942. It still lay broken when the Allies returned in 1945. (IWM)** *Right:* **Elliott comments that although now repaired the metalwork of the bridge still shows the scars of war.**

Defence of the Naung-oo bridgehead. This rather posed shot of Private Tom Barlow on the east bank of the Irrawaddy on February 25, 1945 demonstrates well the changing aspect of the river over the years. With every new monsoon, new channels appear while old ones are swallowed up by the restless waters making even the most up-to-date maps obsolete. (IWM)

Air support was provided by RAF Hurricanes. On February 19, two Hurricanes from No. 20 Squadron opened fire on a suspicious heap of foliage in open ground, the attacking fire revealing a Japanese tank. After the subsequent discovery of its companions, the whole of the squadron, armed with 20mm cannon and rockets, repeatedly attacked the armoured group destroying 13 of the enemy tanks.

With the Mandalay contingent on its way and the diversionary process in full swing, the bridgehead grew and the Japanese resorted to ever more desperate attacks — man versus tank — Japanese soldiers using grenades and small arms destroyed three tanks belonging to the Carabiners and caused 12 casualties amongst the tank crews. Tanks with open turrets, providing some relief from the intense heat, were also vulnerable to sword attacks from the fanatical Japanese infantrymen. By this time, the occupants of the bridgehead had so far been assaulted by more than a dozen Japanese battalions from four divisions, the 2nd, 31st, 33rd and 53rd.

Today the Irrawaddy beach-head area, although very hot, is frequented by tourists. However, there is no evidence left of the critical river crossings that went on at this location. It is possible to reach Naung-oo today by boat from Mandalay although most people come here to see the ancient ruins of Pagan, the remnants of one of Burma's ancient capitals where some of the more shady locals try to pass off cut glass stones as rubies to the more gullible!

The ancient ruins of Pagan — unchanged then as now. (IWM) Major Roy Hudson (see issue 100, page 18) came this way in 1975. This is the main gate in the east wall — all that remains of the old city built by King Pyinbaw in the 9th century.

Tanks . . . and temples. A bulldozed track leads down to the river pontoon ferry site at Pagan. (IWM)

A traffic control point in Naung-oo. The MP is facing a very small narrow lane which was the main exit from the river ferry site. Next stop Meiktila. (IWM)

MEIKTILA

Slim's masterstroke — the unleashing of IV Corps upon Meiktila — left the Japanese reeling as they had clearly thought that Mandalay was the primary objective. IV Corps moved with as much secrecy as two divisions and an armoured brigade can muster and slipped out of the bridgehead in the small hours on February 14. Japanese resistance along the way was stiff and entanglements ensued with a variety of different Japanese units but, with the aid of tanks, the bulk of the opposition was crushed. It was at this time that the first instances were recorded of Japanese soldiers in foxholes and detonating high-explosives when the tanks trundled over them. A further insight into the unwillingness of the Japanese soldier to give himself up occurred four miles south of Taungtha, where a Japanese rearguard facilitating the clearance of a hospital was met. Some 180 of the resulting dead appeared to be hospital patients who were victims of a mass suicide, such was the revulsion of surrender.

By February 28, the leading components of the 48th Brigade of the 17th Indian Division (Major General D. T. 'Punch' Cowan) were under two miles from Meiktila, while the 1/7th Gurkhas supported by tanks took up position on the banks of Meiktila's north lake. Meanwhile, the 255th Indian Tank Brigade supported by the 16th Light Cavalry headed east and made for Meiktila's airfield. At this stage, IV Corps was cut off from orthodox re-supply routes since Taungtha had been retaken by the Japanese, so the corps had to prepare for the assault on Meiktila with the aid of air supply. The battle for Meiktila began at 7 a.m. on March 1, 1945.

The 48th Brigade moved south to hold the north bank of the South Lake while the 63rd Brigade swept across from the west to occupy the slip of land dividing both the North and South Lakes. The 255th Tank Brigade succeeded in capturing the airstrip and, although patrols confirmed the area was largely cleared of Japanese, they were found to be well entrenched in the satellite airstrip of Thedaw further north. At the time of the attack, the Japanese 168th Infantry Regiment was on its way from Lashio in the north-east to rejoin its parent division and its lack of anti-tank weapons cost it dearly, the regiment being decimated by the Allied armour.

While the 48th and 63rd Brigades pressed on through Meiktila, the Japanese had strengthened their positions and mined stretches of the town. Artillery and mortar fire rained down while the most forward elements dug in at the railway station for the night after an air strike in the afternoon. The following day, March 3, saw the total destruction of the remaining Japanese garrison. As the 48th Brigade pressed down on the centre of the town, the Japanese broke out eastwards where they blundered into the 255th Tank Brigade ensuring their final destruction. The airstrip at Thedaw was taken. Much of the following day was spent 'mopping up' stragglers and by the evening Meiktila was in Allied hands. Slim's IV Corps had won Meiktila; now they had to hang on to it, for the Japanese were clearly not going to let their forces further north in Mandalay be starved out.

Meiktila was engaged in an almost continuous Japanese counter-attack from the moment it was captured. The original Japanese plan for their 18th Division to try to split the town in two proved unsuccessful, so on the night of March 14 the Japanese switched the emphasis of the attack to the town's airfield with the aim of reducing the all too effective supply efforts of the RAF. With the 9th Brigade (5th Indian Division) being flown in en masse the following day, the

Pictured here by Major Hudson, the house has since been divided into two.

The battle to capture Meiktila lasted three days and began on March 1. In this picture, troops are seen preparing their mortar positions the day before.

attention given by the Japanese to the airfield made this air-landing operation a hazardous one. However, losses were slight, with only one Dakota out of 54 being hit on landing. Nevertheless, it was clear that the Japanese were far from falling back and the decision had to be taken to suspend 9th Brigade's influx until the situation improved.

The Japanese were responding in aggressive style and the next night, after many skirmishes, it was found that the enemy had entrenched itself on the east side of the runway, having effective control over its entire length. It was not until the next day that the 6/15th Punjabis, supported by tanks and the 1/3rd Gurkhas, managed to clear the perimeter. Although flying was resumed on March 16, the operation was still far from safe with Japanese artillery claiming another Dakota resulting in 22 casualties. Japanese patrols twice fought their way onto the runway on March 17 yet, in spite of this, the day saw a further 60 landings, bringing in the rest of 9th Brigade, allowing other units to concentrate on offensive sweeps across the countryside and also to keep the Japanese at bay from the precious landing ground.

The Japanese, however, were well aware of the airstrip's significance in the arrival of reinforcements and were naturally loathe to let it go unmolested. On the night of March 17/18, a Japanese patrol infiltrated past the defences onto the airfield and set fire to a C-47. The pressure applied by the Japanese deemed the landing of aircraft as too risky and thereafter all supplies were to be air-dropped.

When a large force of Japanese was spotted south-east of the airfield, it was engaged by elements of both the 9th and 48th Brigades. The 48th lost three tanks on March 22 and the Japanese, hot on the heels of the withdrawing column, attacked the brigade's harbour, a secure area where the troops were stood down. The commander of the Japanese 49th Artillery Regiment, Colonel T. Uga, was noted by the Japanese commanders as behaving with conspicuous gallantry, often directing attacks at the scene personally, and bringing his guns to bear almost at point-blank range. During the fighting, a 75mm gun was in action only 15 yards from a forward position, manned by troops from the 1/7th Gurkhas. The Japanese gave up the fight during the night of March 23/24, falling back and leaving 198 dead as well as two guns and a number of small arms.

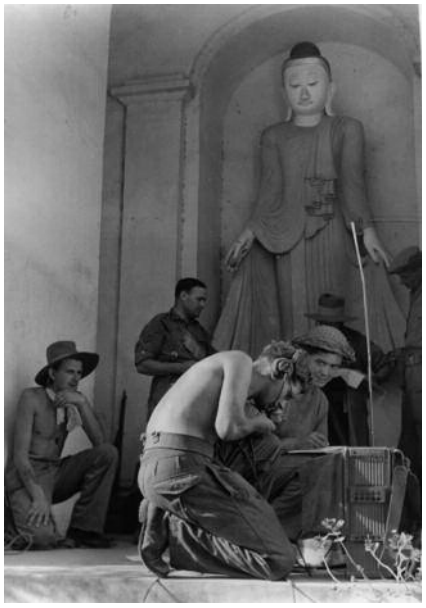
Fighting at the airstrip reached a bloody climax on March 24/25 when two aircraft were destroyed on the strip, the battle being so intense that the commander, Lieutenant-Colonel K. Bayley of the 9th Brigade, was wounded by a shell fired at point-blank range at the command post he was occupying. Hundreds of men died on the battlefield leading up to March 25, heralding the start of yet more skirmishing. At dusk, a tank drove down the runway, the defenders only realising that it was Japanese when it was joined by two more and some infantry and started attacking fortifications on the west side of the landing ground. Aided by six guns, the attacking force succeeded in breaking through the wire defences and was only halted once PIAT anti-tank weapons were brought to bear on the enemy tanks.

By the end of March it was apparent that although the Japanese had little hope of recapturing Meiktila, their constant attacks against the sheer weight of IV Corps, now well massed in the area, made it more realistic for the Allies to await the general advance on the long road to Rangoon. Allied casualties from the capture and defence of Meiktila

Left: **The 1st Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment, lob their bombs over the town's many pagodas. (IWM)** *Right:* **Fifty-plus years later, Elliott found the same pagoda covered with bamboo scaffolding . . . but surely not to repair the same damage!**

Twisted girders and pock-marked steelwork at Meiktila railway station are grim reminders of a battle which took the lives of over 2,500 men.

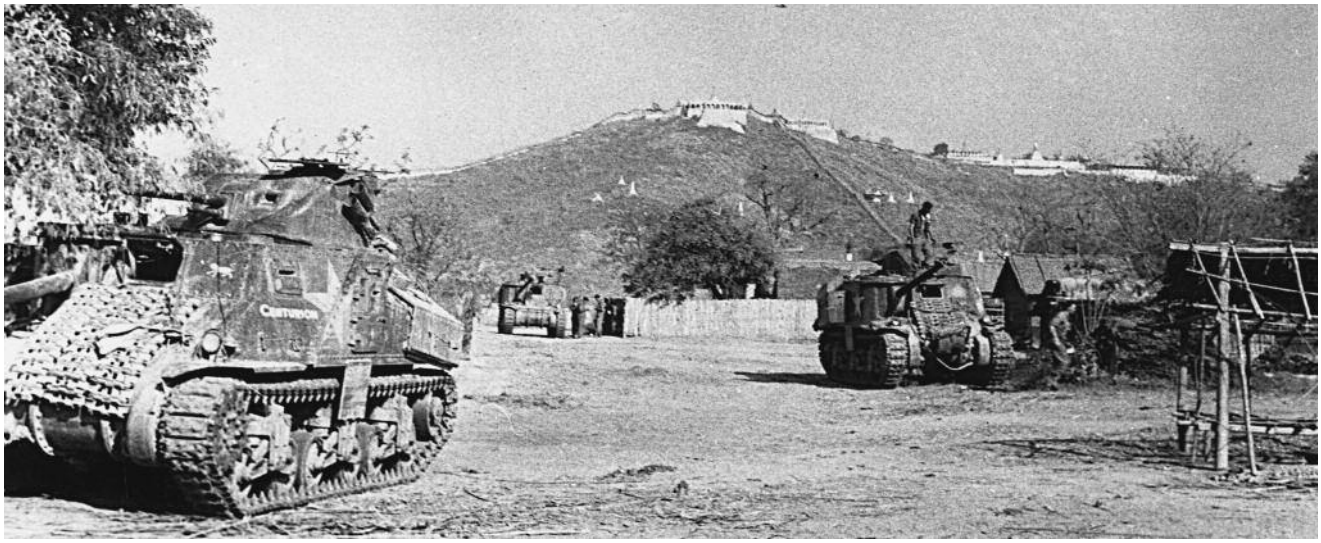
— as well as the initial river crossing — were lighter than those at Mandalay, possibly reflecting the surprise of the Japanese in this attack. In all, 835 men were killed, with 3,174 wounded and 90 missing, with losses from sickness amounting to about the same figure. The Japanese had suffered equally badly, their 18th Division having lost 1,733 men — one third of its strength — and being forced to give up 22 guns (almost half its total number). The once mighty 49th Division had suffered worse and, out of an initial strength of 10,000, the division lost 6,500 and had just three guns remaining out of 48. With much of the Japanese Burma Area Army demoralised and on the retreat, it was time for Slim to move in for the kill. Now the roles were changed and, with the surrounding province in the grasp of Allied hands and Meiktila captured, there seemed little to stop the Allied steamroller on its way to Rangoon, only 170 miles away to the south.



Elliott found that the same effigy looks down on the former West Yorks command post inside the grounds of the monastery.

There are many reminders of March 1945 in modern-day Meiktila. Much of the town was rebuilt following the fighting in 1945 although part of the railway station is original, still bearing damage from the conflict. One rather expensive shop in Meiktila sells colonial bric-a-brac, and amongst the stacks of old and tatty Royal Doulton china and other odds and ends like antique razors and spectacle frames, some interesting pieces of militaria can be found. I saw a Bowie knife in a very good canvas sheath, bayonets (usually of the British variety), compasses, Japanese helmets, a few swords and even a tank periscope! These items are generally all in very good condition but they are not cheap and you would be very disappointed if you expected to find any bargains here; the author still pines after a very lovely little pedometer in the original box but the shop owner wanted the equivalent of UK £20 for it!

Where do we go from here? This signpost two miles north of Meiktila marks the fork on the road to Kyaukpadaung, not quite as poetic-sounding as the 'road to Mandalay'!



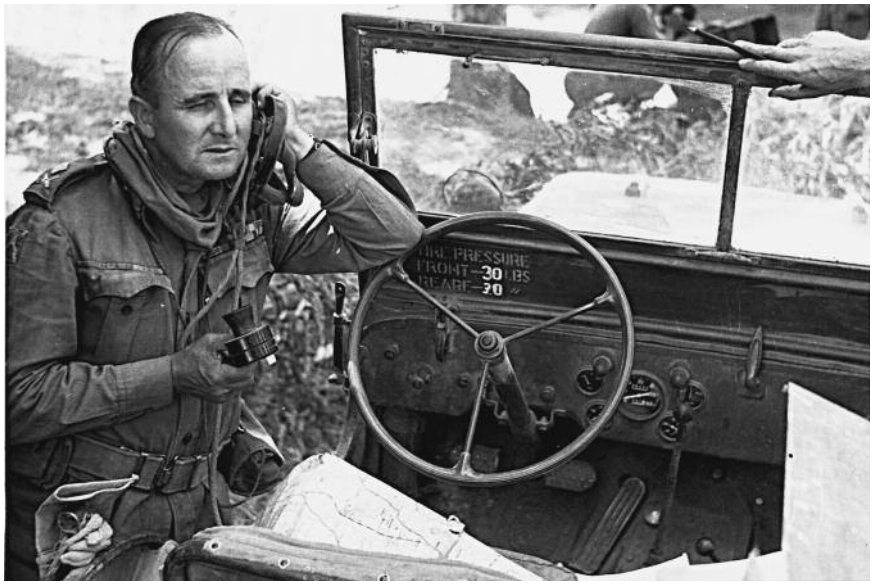
MANDALAY

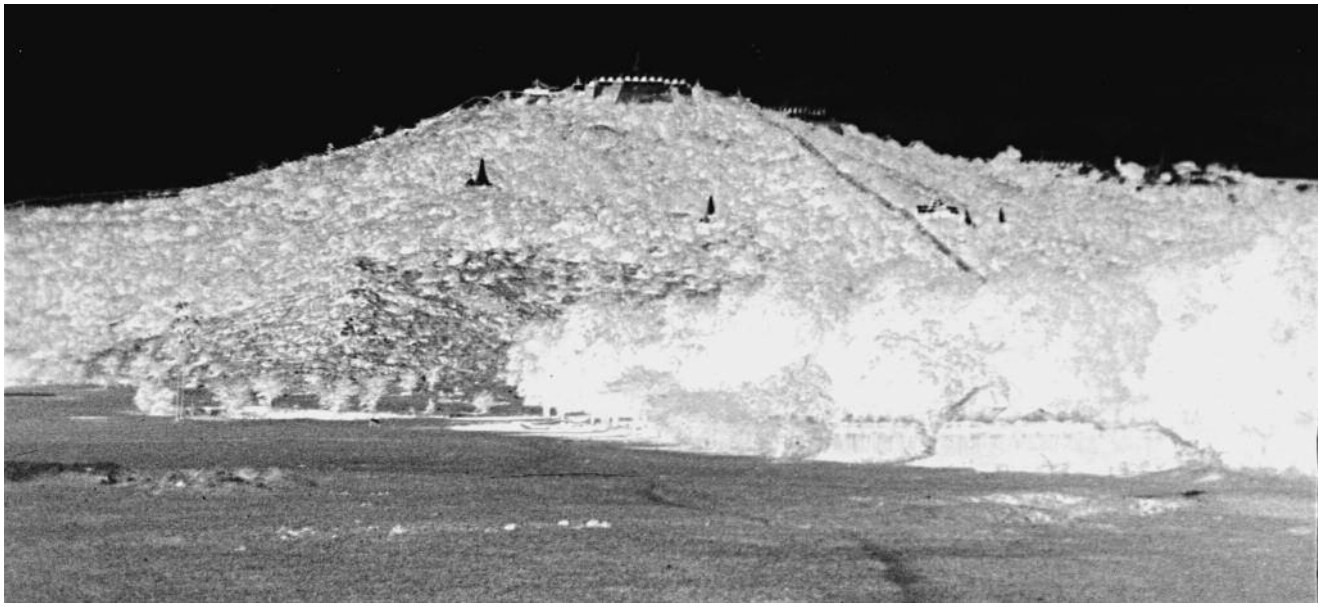
With the Japanese clamouring to retake Meiktila — the vital break in the Japanese chain of communication — a new element of pressure was applied to an already tense campaign. It was clear from the outset that a victory at Mandalay needed to be as swift a triumph as possible.

As XXXIII Corps moved in on Mandalay, its component forces drove toward their respective objectives. General Rees' 19th Division ploughed on to Madaya, just north of Mandalay, closely followed by armour and infantry to be funnelled into Mandalay once Madaya was secure, while the 5th and 20th Indian Divisions swept up from the south, thwarting further any plans the Japanese had of reinforcing Mandalay. Stiletto Force, spawned from the 19th Division, moved off towards Mandalay on March 5, bypassing Madaya and leaving the 98th Brigade to deal with a Japanese rearguard force retreating from Point 1487. On March 8, Stiletto Force stood before the northern slopes of Mandalay Hill. This peculiar, pagoda-dotted range lies like some gigantic beached whale — the only significant high point in Burma's central plain for many miles. The assault on Mandalay Hill, began that same night.

A Gurkha officer who had been in Mandalay before the war accompanied the force and, with his knowledge of the hill's twisting walkways, the 4/4th Gurkhas managed to secure the highest point of the hill by sunrise. The next day saw the Japanese counter-attack twice while the Gurkhas, supported by tanks from the 150th Royal Armoured Corps, mopped up pockets of enemy resistance.

Mandalay Hill *(above)* **was the first and prime objective of Major-General Pete Rees'** *(below)* **plan to take the town. The high ground was taken during the night of March 8/9. (IWM)** *Bottom:* **Major Hudson's comparison was taken from the golf course on the western side. Fort Dufferin is out of the picture to the right.**

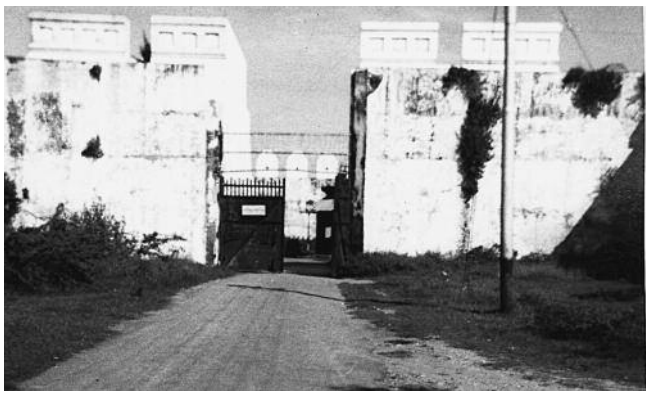




The Mandalay Royal Palace — better known as Fort Dufferin — was a huge structure with an outer perimeter over a mile square. This picture taken after its capture gives a good idea of the thickness of its massive wall which, even using 20th-century weaponry, proved a formidable obstacle. There were several entrances and, unlike the North Gate seen here being used by Allied troops after the surrender, most had the protection of an outer screening wall. (IWM) Today, tourists enter via the South Gate.

As the Gurkhas concentrated on Mandalay Hill, the remainder of the 98th Brigade turned its attentions to Fort Dufferin where the Japanese were firmly entrenched. The fort had been built by the Burmese King Mindon in 1858. A huge walled structure, its walls are a mile square, 23 feet high and 30 feet thick at the base, narrowing to 12 feet at the top, crowned with a walkway. The perimeter is protected by crenellated brickwork several feet thick and, as if this were not enough, the fort is surrounded by a moat 40 feet across and spanned by five easily defended bridges, the whole set-up reminiscent of an oriental medieval castle. On the night of March 8/9 an attempt was made to storm the fort but the defenders were well prepared and repelled the attack. On March 10, a medium gun firing at point-blank range breached the north wall and a plan was formulated to rush the fort under an intensive artillery bombardment. An air observation post confirmed that the breach was a suitable point of entry since debris from the bombardment had formed a ramp down into the fort's grounds.

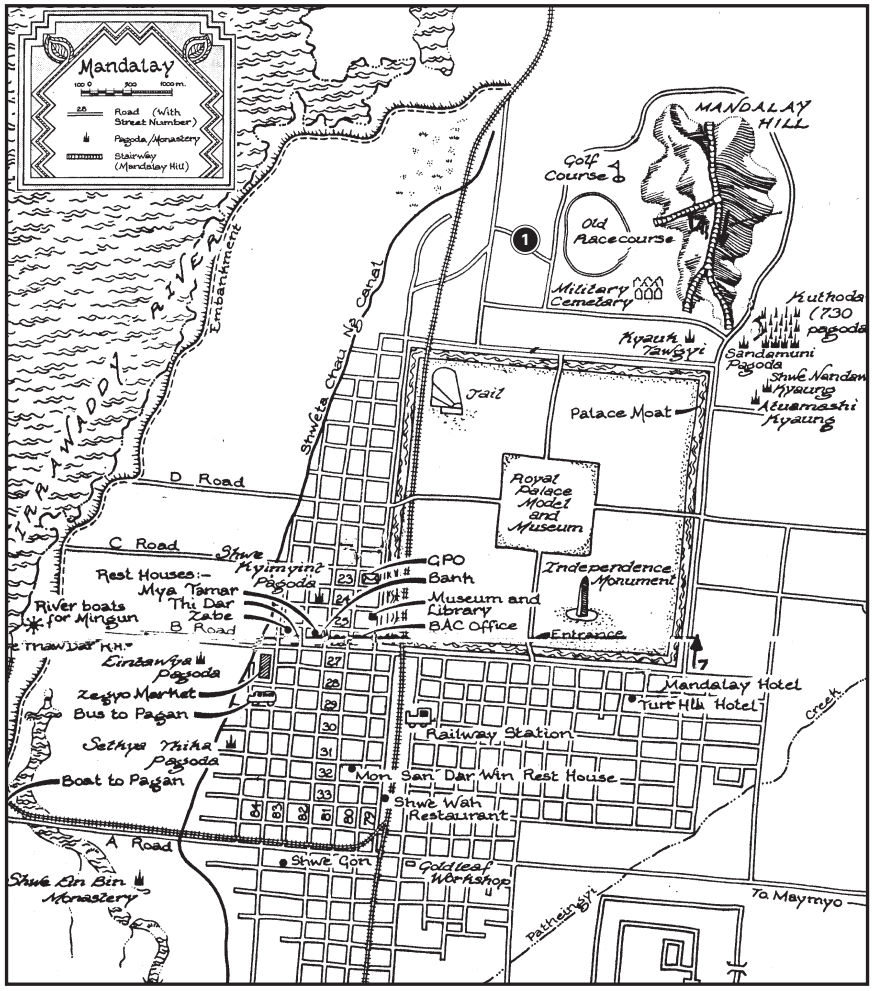
Under cover of intense artillery fire, a detachment of engineers began to deal with the defences on the north bridge. The bridge was not mined, but once the engineers had cut the wire and the artillery concentration had lifted, the Japanese, guessing what the ominous calm implied, opened up on the incoming assault platoon. Despite covering tank fire and smoke rounds from mortars, the platoon lost a third of its number and General Rees had to call a halt. Meanwhile, the battle for Mandalay Hill raged on, for the Japanese still held a portion of the southern and much of the northern faces of the hill.



Looking from inside, the outer screening wall is clearly visible beyond the entrance.

Above left: **Even when the top of the hill had been captured, the fight to eliminate the Japanese on the lower slopes continued for four more days. (IWM)** *Above right:* **Major Hudson determined that this shot was taken on the small track ([1] on the map) to the north of the fort.**

Over the next four days, other attempts to break into the fort failed although much of Mandalay proper was cleared. With most of the town now in Allied hands, efforts were intensified to capture the more stubborn pockets of resistance but the Japanese troops occupying Mandalay Hill fought to the death and the last round. In the end, such was the unwillingness to surrender that Allied engineers, supported by infantry, had to bulldoze enemy foxholes, burying many Japanese alive. The hill was finally taken on March 13. Meanwhile, the battle for the fort went on, it being bombed on numerous occasions with the RAF providing close air support throughout although in one instance, when Allied troops pulled back to allow for a heavy air strike, the Japanese moved forward to take their positions, which offered some protection from the bombing
On the night of March 14/15, the 98th Brigade made another attempt to break into the fort. However, having got across the moat, the two assault platoons found it impossible to hold the breech while the remainder of the attackers forced their way through, and this attack ended — like so many before it — in failure.

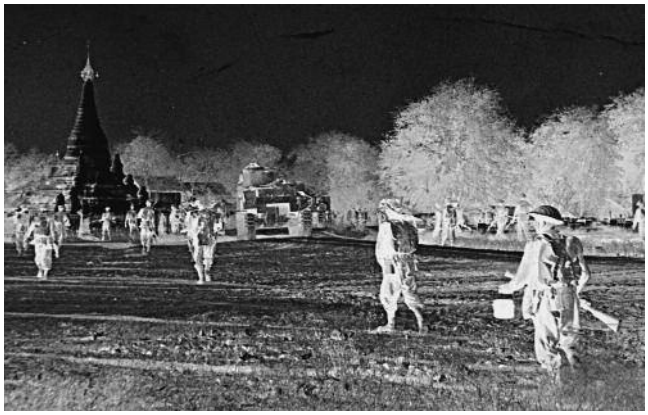


Below left: **Sniping proved particularly troublesome, the numerous pagodas providing excellent vantage points. Here, British troops — possibly the Royal Berkshire Regiment — fire from a position near the summit. (IWM)** *Below right:* **Peace where war once raged. Now only the occasional sound of chanting monks breaks the tranquility.**

Taken from the top of the 'Thousand Steps' leading up the hill, a Thunderbolt (circled) has just dropped a bomb on Fort Dufferin obscured here in the smoke. (IWM)

With Meiktila under a determined Japanese counter-attack, the pressure was on in the north for an Allied triumph at Mandalay. More aerial attacks on Fort Dufferin followed, No. 221 Group, RAF, subjecting the walls of the fort to more damage on March 15 by unleashing a force of B-25 Mitchell bombers armed with 2,000lb bombs on the stronghold. However, as the attack was carried out at 6,000ft, the bombing resulted in poor accuracy so the next day P-47 Thunderbolts, armed with 500lb bombs, carried their bombing runs out at a lower altitude, from south to north. The wall was hit, but not breached as it was found that the bombs frequently bounced right over the moat and exploded in the vicinity of Mandalay Hill! The fighter-bombers then changed to a north-south orientation and some gaps were made in the upper wall of the fort. In the meantime, more medium guns had opened up at close range on the north and east walls, producing numerous points of entry for the attacking forces.

Jungle growth makes a comparison from the same vantage point almost impossible.



While the battle for the fort continued, tanks and infantry are pictured here filtering into Mandalay town proper for the attack on the central areas where the Japanese were still holding out. (IWM)

March 20: General Rees collects his prize and ascends to the battlements.

The next significant assault on the fort occurred two days later. The plan was for infantrymen supported by engineers and flame-thrower units to infiltrate through breaches in the north-east and north-west areas of the wall. The operation was to take place at night and troops were to wear rubber-soled boots and move up without helmets to maintain an element of stealth. Once entry into the fort had been achieved, the north-west and north-east groups were to regroup and attempt to secure the northern half of the fort. Then, fighting patrols were to be sent to capture and hold the remaining exits at which time tanks would be sent in and the remaining Japanese, starved and low on ammunition, mopped up piecemeal.

As the troops moved off at 10 p.m., paddling across the moat, they were spotted by the Japanese who scrambled to their positions on the wall, opening fire on the boats below. One boat was lost and it was then found that the flame-throwers lacked the range to deal with the small-arms fire of the Japanese defenders. It was also clear that the attackers had nowhere to go and, with dawn approaching, General Rees ordered their withdrawal.

For the rest of March 18, the RAF continued their bombing attacks on the north wall. The next day artillery took over with many guns firing at point-blank range from 300 to 500 yards so that, by dusk, there were around 20 separate breaches.

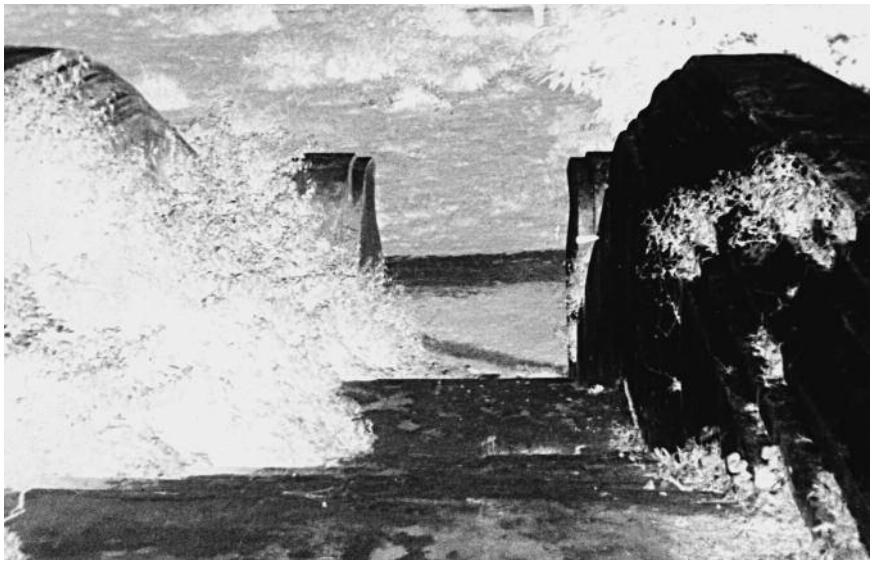
At midday on March 20, after another of the RAF's heavy raids on the stronghold, a white flag, accompanied by the Union Flag, emerged from the east gate of the battered fort. The six ethnic Burmese who proffered this surrender announced that the surviving Japanese defenders had left the fort during the night. The 62nd Brigade moved into the fort, reporting it clear, and at 1.30 p.m., 12 days after the battle for the city had begun, one of the gunners nailed a Union Flag to Fort Dufferin's flagstaff. Mandalay was Slim's.

The victory had not come cheap. The Japanese had been ready for XXXIII Corps — an unfortunate by-product of Slim's diversionary plan to snatch Meiktila — and it cost the Allies 1,472 killed, 4,933 wounded and a further 120 men missing. Sickness (losses from which dropped later in the campaign due to improved medical care), accounted for another 3,571.

Mandalay is Burma's second city and at one time was the capital of the old Burmese kingdom. Immortalised by Rudyard Kipling and later by Ian Dury and the Blockheads (who were obviously fond of Kipling!) in their 1978 hit record, it was a place I was very much looking forward to see for myself. When I arrived there in June 1996, I found it to be very dusty with many of the buildings having obviously been rebuilt since the war. The heat was intense — very similar to that suffered by XXXIII Corps over 50 years before — but I loved the place. Being smack-bang in the centre of Burma, it is a comfortable and great base from which to strike out to other locations; no doubt Slim thought so too!

When cycling around the huge perimeter of Fort Dufferin today, patchy post-war repairs to the wall are very obvious and the fort is still very much under Burmese military control.

Mandalay is an excellent place to hunt for military relics — there are some interesting pieces in impromptu tourist shops — but again, they are not cheap (a little less than Meiktila) and one is unlikely to find anything particularly scarce.



Today Fort Dufferin is very much under Burmese military control.

In the background of this picture can be seen Mandalay Hill; in between lies the formidable moat around the palace. (IWM)

Repairs to the crenellated wall seem not to have followed faithfully to the original.

Left: **Monday, April 2, 1945, and a moment of quiet reflection in the advance to Rangoon. The commander of the 19th Indian Division, Major-General Pete Rees, and Lieutenant-Colonel H. Finch of the 2nd Royal Berkshire Regiment pictured attending a church service in Maymyo, 40 miles east of Mandalay. (IWM)** *Right:* **Elliott found All Saints Church little changed, albeit that Burma has not been part of the British Empire for over 50 years.**

MOUNT POPA AND SURROUNDS

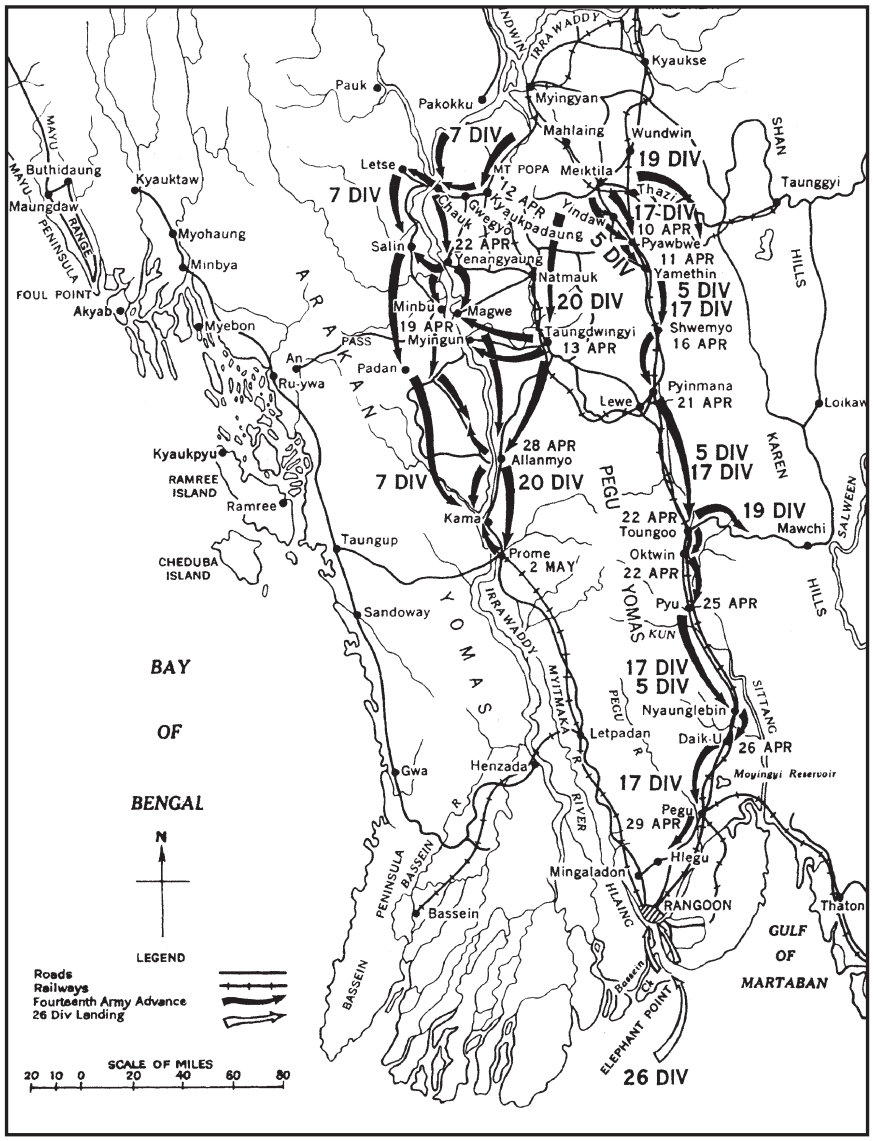
The Imperial Armies were on the retreat from the Central Front. While the Japanese high command braced itself for what was sure to be a decisive set of battles, IV Corps was to spearhead the advance to Rangoon, leading the push down the road from Meiktila.

While IV Corps was driving south, XXXIII Corps was clearing the area along the Irrawaddy, a region, part of which contained the rich oil fields surrounding the oil town of Chauk. The first signs of serious Japanese resistance were met at Point 534 south of Letse, but resistance crumbled following an air strike by four squadrons of RAF Thunderbolts and Hurricanes. The 89th Brigade (7th Indian Division) was held up by the stubborn Japanese defences around Chauk. As the 5th Brigade (British 2nd Division) moved south into the Mount Popa area, after minor skirmishes with small INA (Indian National Army) units, the decision was made to seize the railhead town of Kyaukpadaung and neutralise any Japanese resistance around Mount Popa. The region was believed to be occupied by the Japanese 154th Regiment.

As the 268th Brigade cut the enemy's communications to the rear, 33rd Brigade moved in on Kyaukpadaung from the north. The capture of this small town was essential since, not only was it situated in a strategic position as far as the railway junction was concerned, but it was also at the centre of an important road junction, the capture of which was vital for continued security along the XXXIII Corps most forward position.

The attack on Kyaukpadaung was launched on April 12. The Japanese were not sufficiently strong to resist the repeated attacks of the Allied armour, and, after a long day, they slipped away during the night. All that remained the next morning were 32 INA troops who surrendered along with six Japanese, 125 dead and a 15cm howitzer as well as numerous items of oil plant machinery and railway rolling stock. By April 12, with Slim's army extended in a long line five divisions wide across the central front, the RAF moved up, a step closer to Rangoon, the mobile advanced control centre following IV Corps on its more direct push to recapture the capital.

However, even with Fourteenth Army's advance as rapid as it was, time was already running out as it was already starting to rain in the northernmost edge of the monsoon belt turning all unmetalled roads into muddy quagmires. The humid atmosphere that



Above: **Troops from the 5th Brigade (2nd Division) supported by armour move up the slopes of Mount Popa. (IWM)** *Below:* **At this point, the road curves to the left, eventually to reach the steps of the monastery. It was just around the corner that . . .**

followed the monsoon deluges left men gasping in the intensely hot and steaming air and unable to function properly in what was a very hostile environment. The effects of the climate change increased the hazards of overflying the Burmese countryside too. RAF crews were vulnerable in the banks of cumulus clouds that preceded the early rainfall. Nevertheless, these obstacles could not be allowed to slow the advance, for conditions would only get worse as the Fourteenth Army approached Rangoon and the monsoon season started in earnest.

The Allies began to close in on Chauk and the settlement at Mount Popa. As Chauk fell after a stiff tussle, 268th Brigade launched the attack on the garrison on Mount Popa. The long-extinct volcano dominates the landscape around about and is visible for many miles as a distinctive landmark in the flat dusty plains of central Burma, the peak of the mountain being formed by the ragged edges of the crater. A single long and winding road attempts to take the bite out of the gradient up to the summit, but the hill is tortuously steep, especially near the top, and to travel the distance in the heat of the day by foot would have been utterly exhausting. The 1/3rd Madras and the Nepalese Mahindra Dal Regiment engaged the enemy on April 13, but the Japanese defences were well organised and on the night of the 14th/15th a bombardment started a brush fire in the scrub surrounding the positions of the 1/3rd Madras, forcing the battalion to move forward into safety beyond the barrage curtain. Progress in the heat was slow and six days later one battalion had reached the northern tracts skirting the mountain where it met up with 5th Brigade, while the remaining battalion took up position on a ridge in the southern shadows of the volcano. As night fell on the 19th, fires were seen breaking out all over the mountain as the Japanese, obviously doubting their ability to hold the hill mass, started to destroy their stores to prevent them falling into Allied hands. As the rest of 268th Brigade moved in, numerous small groups of Japanese on the retreat were engaged, and five 105mm guns and 17 3-ton lorries captured.

The next day the defences on Mount Popa crumbled as infantry from 268th Brigade, supported by armour, swept up the slopes of the beleaguered mountain, the odd Japanese remaining fleeing under the cover of darkness only to be destroyed in the open when daylight came.

The Allied victories in the Irrawaddy basin and on Mount Popa were significant — effectively securing the attacker's right flank and thus providing XXXIII Corps with the security it needed to advance further into the heart of Burma and into the Rangoon district where it hoped to deal the Japanese a crushing blow before the crippling monsoon season started in earnest. It was a race against time.

. . . the Japanese resorted to suicide tactics to try to halt the advance. *Left:* **A 250lb bomb was found buried in the road with a command wire to a nearby foxhole for a soldier to detonate the explosives beneath a passing tank. (IWM)** *Above:* **Elliott found several examples of empty bomb casings being put to secular use as bells — like this one in Mount Popa monastery.**

YAMETHIN

The IV Corps advance was south on a two-brigade front on a direct collision course with the Japanese who held Pyawbwe. The town was held by the tattered remnants of Lieutenant-General M. Honda's 33rd Army, severely mauled from their encounter with the British at Meiktila, and the speed of the Allied advance caught the defenders on the hop before they could be bolstered by the 15th Army. The 33rd was no match for the Allied armour flung at it by Slim, and the town was enveloped, cutting its communications to the rear, before General Cowan, commanding the attack, moved in for the kill.

After initially and unknowingly surrounding the Japanese headquarters, Allied tanks moved off to the north, giving General Honda and his staff the chance to flee to Yamethin where they regrouped with the 18th Division. With their leader gone, the 33rd Army fought on to its destruction. Although Honda had given orders to pull out on the night of April 9/10, when Pyawbwe was finally entered the following day, 1,110 dead were found along with 13 guns. An army had perished along with its weapons: total Japanese losses from April 3-10 being 2,900 dead, 44 guns, six medium tanks and 70 motor transport vehicles. Only 29 prisoners had been taken. One incident on April 10, when a column of 150 Japanese soldiers was marching north to Pyawbwe, exemplified the discipline and martial code of the Japanese soldier, for when it was attacked with mortar rounds and small-arms fire, resulting in a third of their number being killed, the troops did not break formation, continuing to march straight on to Pyawbwe.

As the escaped remnants of Honda's army retreated southward and regrouped at Yamethin, they were pursued by elements of the 5th Indian Division (Major-General E. C. R. Mansergh). On the evening of April 11, the leading elements of the 5th Division came under heavy fire as they attempted to enter Yamethin, forcing them to withdraw north of the town. The Japanese force cut off an advance guard some 100 strong (which had passed through the town without incident) from the main body.

Early next morning, the 123rd Brigade harbour was attacked by low-flying Japanese aircraft. There were few casualties but a bomb (the only one dropped) hit a petrol lorry and the resulting fire destroyed 28 vehicles, including several petrol and ammunition lorries.

Efforts to enter Yamethin that morning failed as 500 Japanese reinforcements had arrived. A further attack with heavy air and artillery support by the 7th York and Lancaster and 3/9th Jats in the afternoon captured no further ground and at 4.30 p.m. the attack was halted. That night, the Jats, who were on the north-west of the town, were attacked twice but they counter-attacked later that morning, clearing and occupying the area west of the main road. However, the advance guard remained cut-off from the main body since the Japanese still had a controlling arc of fire over the vital road. Resistance in the eastern half of the town was stubborn and it was not until midday that the 2/1st Punjabis, supported by tanks and attacking from the west and south-west, managed to drive the Japanese from Yamethin. The action at Yamethin was a fierce one and cost 123rd Brigade 126 casualties and the Royal Armoured Corps two tanks. The dead bodies of 80 Japanese soldiers were found, their injured colleagues presumably having escaped with the retreating main force.

Above: **The remains of the Burma railway — Mandalay to Rangoon. Heavy air and artillery attacks reduced Yamethin railway station to rubble. (IWM)** *Below:* **Technically, photography of railway installations is forbidden in Burma though Elliott was not to be outdone.**

Left: **Not far away he found evidence of the fighting. This shell of a Ford armoured car (technically an Armoured Carrier, Wheeled, Indian pattern on Canadian Ford Quad chassis) — possibly one of those lost by the 116th Royal Armoured Corps on April 14 — lies near the local tennis court where further signs of battle are evident** *(right).*

Just 50 miles from Rangoon, a rifleman of the 1/10th Gurkhas enters the smouldering streets of Pegu on May 1, 1945. (IWM)

Much of what is now called Bago has been rebuilt including the mosque in the background of the wartime photograph.

PEGU

The approach of the 17th Division on Pegu (Bago as it is known in modern-day Burma) was halted on April 30 at the Moyingyi Reservoir where the Japanese were found in a well-organised defensive position. The reservoir protected their right flank, while a minefield covered other approaches. Natural obstacles prevented the outflanking of the position by 17th Division's tanks so the 9th Royal Horse were ordered to make a two-squadron frontal attack with their medium tanks at 9.30 a.m., supported by a company of the 6/7th Rajputs. The attackers were held up by the stubborn Japanese defences but managed to break through to establish a road-block to the south of the position. At 3 p.m. elements of the 1/3rd Gurkhas and the third squadron of the 9th Royal Horse were sent into the fray. The Japanese fought on, but in vain and by 6.30 p.m. all resistance had ceased. The Japanese had lost over 200 men, and numerous stores, dumps of ammunition and several vehicles were also captured. The 17th Division suffered 65 casualties and lost three tanks.

Pegu itself was the last major town on the road to Rangoon and as such it was occupied by a large Japanese force — cobbled together and patriotically (and perhaps optimistically) called the Rangoon Defence Force (RDF). Commanded by Major-General H. Matsui, the RDF consisted of the 105th Independent Mixed Brigade, a provisional brigade made up of convalescent soldiers; Japanese civilians; military prisoners; men from sea, rail and other administrative units; an anti-aircraft battalion; an airfield battalion; several infantry units made up of training personnel, trainees and reservists, and two naval guard companies. All in all, the force numbered around 6,000 men.

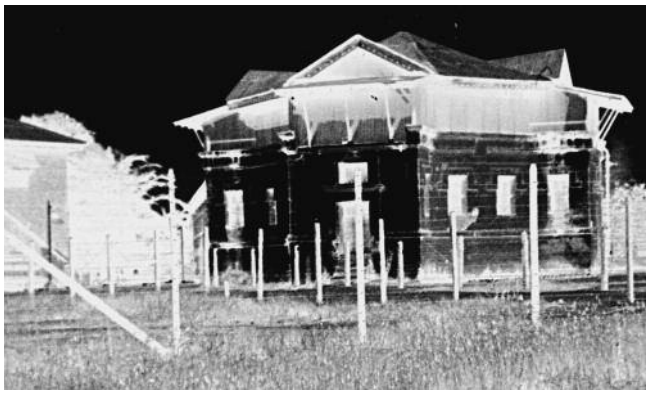
With lightning speed, the 17th Division's attack on Pegu began on April 30. A company from the 48th Brigade moved up to the railway station, taking the northernmost bridge which had been blown by the Japanese. Meanwhile, the 63rd Brigade was slowed by well-hidden Japanese guns, only one of their tanks being destroyed and its supporting armour hit taking considerable damage. By 5 p.m., as the attack was halted at dusk, the 1/3rd Gurkhas and the 5th Horse had secured a 200ft hill overlooking Pegu. Night patrols sent out reported that the Japanese were withdrawing and by 8 a.m. the next day, armour from the 255th Tank Brigade had cleared eastern Pegu leaving 133 dead Japanese and 24 guns, eight of which were of British origin (most of them still serviceable), eight Vickers and an ordnance dump. Pegu railway station was seized and by the evening of May 1 the town was in Allied hands. The Fourteenth Army was now just 50 miles from Rangoon.

Rangoon — symbolic goal of the 'forgotten' Fourteenth Army in its epic advance. Its railway station was also a sorry sight when captured. (IWM)

'Japs Gone'. The enigmatic inscription on the roof of Insein Prison which spelt the end of the Japanese occupation of Burma.

RANGOON

The assault on Rangoon was initiated by an airborne landing of a battalion of Gas at Elephant Point, south-west of the city. Meanwhile, RAF aircraft over-flying the city reported that the words 'Japs gone' had been painted on the roof of Insein Prison, a location which held many Allied prisoners of war. The message was given credibility by the addition of a piece of RAF slang — 'Extract Digit' (i.e. Wake up!) An RAF Mosquito then landed on the racecourse, the crew being the first to confirm the Japanese had fled. Rangoon was in Allied hands once more.



Left: **The few Allied PoWs remaining in the prison were soon replaced by Japanese. (IWM)** *Right:* **When the comparison was taken by Major Hudson in 1974, the prison was in use as an army recruiting depot.**

The joint Thanksgiving and Victory Parade in Rangoon included troops from all the services which fought in Burma.

The Military Governor, Major-General Henry Chambers commanding the 26th Indian Division, took the salute.

THE DISCOVERY OF KN563

By Elliott Smock

In November 1990, a Burmese hunter deep in the hilly wilds of north-western Burma, stumbled upon the wreckage of an aeroplane. Searching through the debris he found a watch inscribed with the name and Service number of a W. Kyle. The watch was passed on to a Christian missionary who handed it to a representative of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) at Taukkyan Cemetery outside Rangoon. By chance, a visiting British lady who saw the watch informed the CWGC representative that the 'R' prefix of the Service number suggested that the watch had belonged to a serviceman in the RCAF, and so, after several routine attempts to resolve the situation by the CWGC, the matter was passed to the Canadian Veterans Affairs organisation in July 1995. Upon further research it was learnt that William Kyle had held the rank of pilot officer and was the co-pilot of a C-47 which had failed to return from carrying out an air supply drop in June 1945, and was one of six men subsequently reported missing.

With the crash site identified, the Veterans Affairs and the Canadian Department of National Defence set up a Foreign Affairs and International Trade recovery team, their task being to positively identify the wreckage and to recover and identify the human remains. However, the mission to reach the crash site was far from straightforward. It was close to the Indian border and hence in a restricted area for which permission was needed; furthermore, timing was critical since the unbearable jungle heat and monsoon conditions prevalent between March and September would make such a physical exercise near impossible. A first attempt to retrieve the remains took place in the autumn of 1995 but failed; similarly, a second attempt in spring 1996 also met with failure. In the meantime, Kyle's watch was returned to Canada whereupon Veterans Affairs Canada reunited it with his surviving relatives.

As more information was collected regarding the site, and as communications between the Canadian and Burmese authorities improved, the task looked more likely to succeed. The Canadian government was wholeheartedly behind the initiative and the Burmese authorities were anxious to find a way to improve their image on the political stage. Permission for the operation to take place was pursued at the highest diplomatic channels and, after more than a year of concentrated planning and diplomacy, the team was granted full permission to attend to the crash site.

It was the task of Major Bill Leavey of the Canadian Armed Forces to put together a ten-man military team to go into the jungle and recover the remains of the lost airmen. Forensic dentist Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Field would be in charge of the most important aspect of the mission — that of recording and recovering the remains — while military policeman Chief Warrant Officer Terry Cyr was responsible for team security. Other team members included Master Corporals Steve Cruickshank and Wade Patterson, communications; Captain Homer Tien, team doctor; Corporals Frank Hudec and Mark Lamontagne, still and video footage; and Warrant Officer Tim Robinson and Jim Vienneau, field and jungle experts. Civilian members included Garth Pritchard and Daron Donahue who were cameramen for the National Film Board. Team leader was Philip MacDonald of Veterans Affairs Canada. Shelly Whiting, the second secretary of the Canadian Embassy in Thailand, also accompanied the team. To prepare them for the Burmese jungle, everyone embarked on an intensive three-day jungle training course, also receiving numerous immunisation shots.

Top: **The Canadians return. Following in the wake of a long-lost Dakota, which failed to return from a supply-dropping mission to Myitkyina on June 21, 1945, a recovery party from the Canadian Armed Forces fly over the Burmese jungle to search for the remains of the crew of KN563.** *Above:* **Led by Major Bill Leavey, the team undertook route marches with full rucksacks to prepare them for the mission.**

Base camp was established at Khamti, a village some 50 miles from the crash site.

Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Field briefs Phil MacDonald of the Canadian Veterans Affairs and Major Leavey before the off.

The recovery team arrived in Rangoon (now known as Yangon) on November 22, 1996. The temperature was 35°C (November is quite pleasant in Burma) and the team began to adjust to the very un-Canadian heat and humidity. After seven days of acclimatisation and revision of jungle techniques, the search and recovery team flew 1,000 miles north, courtesy of Myanmar Airways, Burma's domestic server. They landed at Khamti, a small outpost which was to be their base camp for the next few weeks. Meeting with the district's military authorities, the expedition details were finalised. Next morning, December 2, Major Leavey's group flew 50 miles by helicopter to be dropped off in the jungle.

Upon arrival at the crash site, the remains of the aircraft appeared upside-down, the only complete piece of wreckage being the tail unit, much of the rest having been gutted by fire. As Leavey said afterwards: 'Wreckage was scattered over an area of approximately 30 square metres, in a ravine with a steep slope. The largest part was roughly 1.5 metres long, but there were hundreds of small fragments scattered both on and below the jungle soil and mire. No remains were immediately apparent, and more than 50 years of erosion, vegetation and monsoon storms had altered the site significantly. The only solution was to dig. And dig we did. It was quite warm by Canadian standards and after about 30 minutes we were soaked with sweat.'

The only major intact piece of wreckage found at the crash site of the No. 435 Squadron C-47 was the crumpled tail section.

The whole object of the exercise was to recover human remains. *Left:* **Major Siu Thu, the Burmese Army liaison officer, hands over pieces of bone found by hunters and** *(right)* **points out the spot where these had been unearthed.**

The recovery team dug for three days and on the second day Cruickshank found a watch with an inscription on the back which read: 'Jim, from Mom, 26-12-1943'. That was a moving moment for the team members, one commenting: 'We've all got little children and it was from this guy's mom'.

On the third day, the team gathered together and performed a remembrance service for the dead airmen. It was an emotional moment for the 14 Canadians as Shelly Whiting recited the WW1 poem *Verbatim* followed by Philip MacDonald's rendition of the Act of Remembrance.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning;
We will remember them.

The team hand-dug the whole area, carefully sifting the soil for bone fragments.

The team laid six poppies in a cross on a tree at the crash site and placed a 'Canada Remembers' flag at half-mast on another tree. Six small remembrance pennants were planted before the team departed.

The individual personal effects belonging to some of the crew were catalogued and returned to the families. Parts recovered from the aircraft were destined to be displayed at the Canadian War Museum including a metal cup (in two sections), examples of melted aluminium, an engine hose cover, an aircraft wheel jack, a radio box outlet, glow tube, fuel pump and various other electrical components, temperature gauge, parachute, fire extinguisher plate, Douglas cover plate, engine control cover, two seat-belt buckles, steering component and control arm, blinker oxygen flow indicator, a fishing lure, two forks, a small folding knife, a Pratt & Whitney engine plate, shell casings (exploded), a radio jack, an eye glass (spectacles) and a propeller blade.

Left: **At the end of the operation, members of the recovery team stood in silent remembrance of the day when six of their fellow-countrymen lost their lives on this precise spot.** *Right:* **Canada Remembers.**

WHAT HAPPENED TO KN563?

Dakota KN563 belonged to No. 435 (Royal Canadian Air Force) Transport Squadron. During the Burma campaign, the squadron transported 24,906 tonnes of freight and 14,000 passengers, and evacuated 851 casualties, achieving a total of 15,681 sorties over Burma.

Under the command of Warrant Officer William Rogers of Halifax, KN563 took off from Tulihal, India, on the morning of June 21, 1945, her crew briefed to drop supplies to the Fourteenth Army at Myitkyina some 200 miles from base. Nothing further was heard of the aircraft and it did not return. Consequently, the pilot, Warrant Officer Rogers; Pilot Officer William Kyle of Perth, Ontario; Flight Sergeant Charles McLaren of Campbellville, Ontario; Flying Officer David Cameron of Oshawa, Ontario; Warrant Officer Stanley Cox of Beresford, Manitoba; and Leading Aircraftman Cornelius Kopp of Duchess, Atlanta, were all posted as missing, presumed dead, and their names were added to the Singapore memorial.

The reason for the crash remains obscure. The monsoon period is in full swing in June, especially in the hilly regions of northern Burma where low, wispy clouds often obscure visibility. In such poor conditions, the aircraft could easily have flown into high ground. Extensive fire damage indicates that the aircraft did not run out of fuel and, although engine failure is unlikely, it is still a possibility.

After the cessation of hostilities in South East Asia in August 1945, both British and American search teams made extensive efforts to trace and recover the remains of lost servicemen. From February 1946 onwards, numerous British parties scoured Burma and the surrounding countries for the remains of wrecked aircraft and their occupants. Search Team No. 9 surveyed the Indo-Burma frontier — the region in which KN563 was discovered — an area which has some of the most difficult terrain in the whole country. A report issued by Air Command, South East Asia, in 1946 said: 'Some 50 crashes remain outstanding in these areas after continuous search, apart from monsoon periods, extending over 15 months by one of the most experienced OCs [Officers Commanding] Searcher Teams. In view of the lack of positive information regarding the location of crashes, it is probably true to say that, except in isolated cases, few, if any, of these crashes will ever be found.'

The remains of the crew of KN563 were laid to rest in Taukkyan War Cemetery on March 5, 1997. They were buried with full military honours, the difficult task of identifying the remains having led to a collective grave with a single, flag-draped coffin. In Canada, Veterans Week 1997 was launched on November 5 with the hand-over of the components from KN563 by the Honourable Fred Miflin, Minister of Veterans Affairs, to the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. The ceremony, held at the Canadian Museum of Civilisation was attended by family members of the six airmen, members of the recovery team, Canadian veterans and high school students. Mr Miflin said 'I am proud to be able to launch Veterans Week with the transfer of these important items to the Canadian War Museum."

The representative pieces of KN563 were accepted on behalf of the museum by Dr George MacDonald who responded: 'The mission of these six airmen has come to a conclusion . . . But with these pieces now housed at the Canadian War Museum, we will ensure their story continues to be heard.'

March 1997. In the presence of family members, a single coffin is borne to its last resting place in Taukkyan War Cemetery.

LIEUTENANT HENRY FONDA, USN

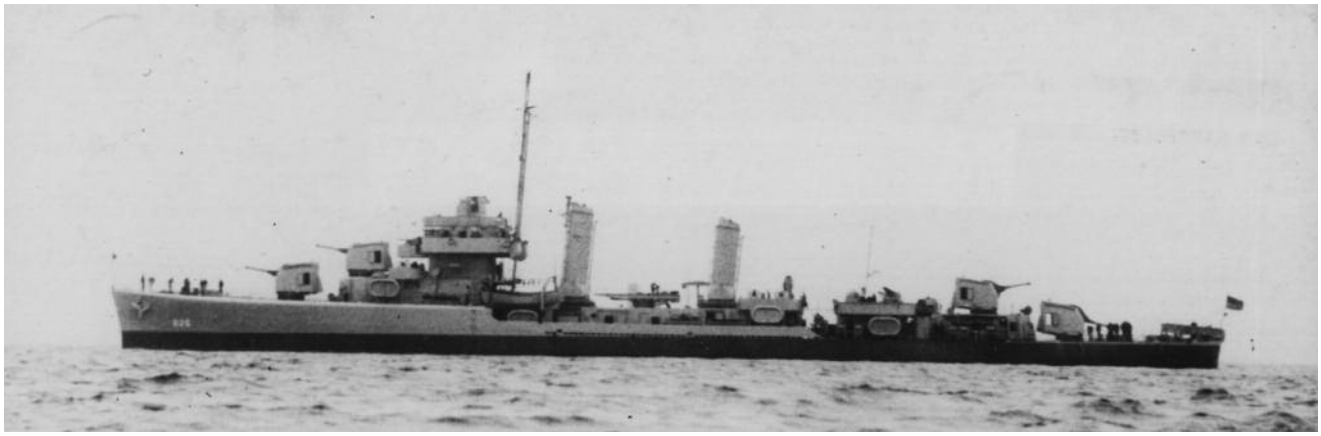
By James E. Wise Jr and Anne Collier Rehill

Henry J. Fonda approached everything he did with a seriousness of purpose. After Pearl Harbor he registered for the draft right away, and on August 24, 1942, he walked into Naval Headquarters in Los Angeles to enlist. His hope was to serve as a gunner's mate, since this was a shooting war and Fonda, as always, intended to give it his all and get the job done right. He was already an established star, having made his screen debut in 1935 in *The Farmer Takes a Wife,* and having played the lead, in 1940, in what many still consider his masterpiece, *The Grapes of Wrath* (for which he was nominated for an Academy Award).

In 1942, at age 37, Fonda was exempt from the draft. He was not exempt from the objections of his wife, but Frances Seymour finally relented and sent him off with her blessing. She would wait with their children in their Pennsylvania Dutch-style house (complete with walk-in fireplace, it sat on nine acres of gentleman's farmland amid flagstone walkways, flowers, vines, haystacks, chickens, rabbits, and a Victory Garden grown under the guidance of Organic Gardening and Farming magazine). Fonda felt that he must do his duty as an able-bodied American man. What would his fans say, he asked Fran, if they saw his face up there on the screen instead of out there with the rest of his compatriots? His place was with them, for now.

Born in 1905 in Nebraska to a printer father and a mother who woke him up in the middle of the night at age five so he would not miss Halley's Comet, Henry Fonda was brought up a Christian Scientist and taught to be honest, hardworking, and forthright.

Top: **Having joined the US Navy voluntarily in 1942, Henry Fonda ended his wartime career with the award of the Bronze Star for meritorious service as an Assistant Operations Officer and Air Combat Intelligence Officer. Here he is seen receiving the decoration from Vice Admiral G. D. Murray, the Commander Marianas.** *Above:* **Fonda began his acting career in 1935 in *The Farmer Takes a Wife* with Janet Gaynor.**



Fonda began his service career as a Quartermaster Third Class on the USS *Satterlee* *(above),* **ending the war a lieutenant** *(below)* **on the staff of the Commander Forward Area Central Pacific aboard the USS *Curtiss*** *(bottom).*

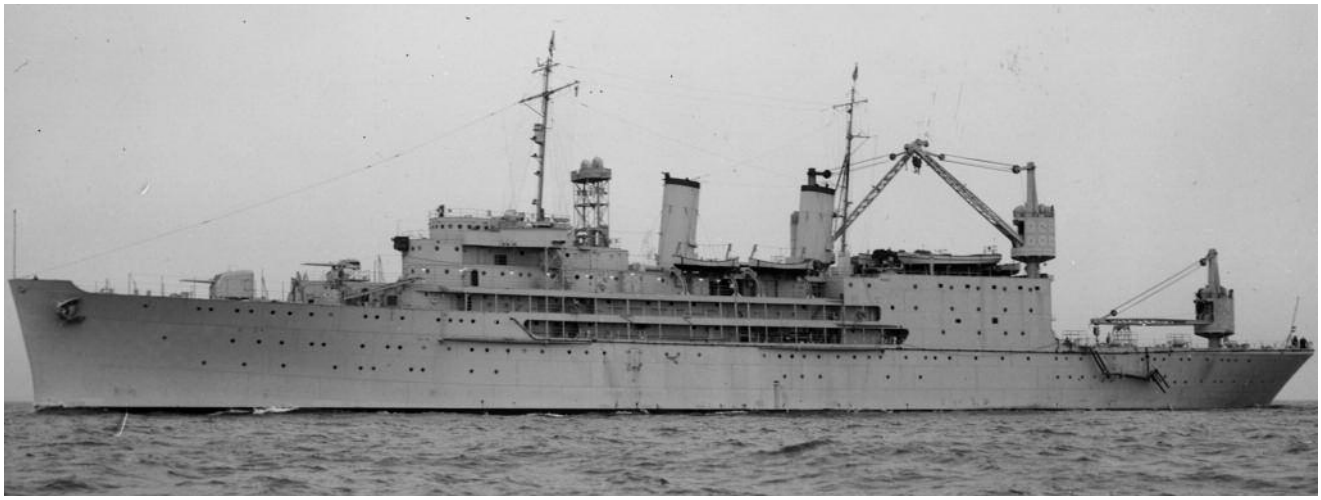
He went through boot camp, with its physical training, questionnaires and tests, at San Diego. Previously always skinny—he and buddy Jim Stewart (see *After the Battle* No. 1) had tried muscle-building exercises at MGM to get some meat onto their scrawny arms — on the boot-camp diet Fonda gained weight for the first time in his life. He earned his white cap after eight weeks' training. His plan of becoming a gunner's mate was fouled, though, by a chief petty officer who gave him what-for about wanting so badly to go out and get himself all shot up. After seeing the results of Fonda's tests and recognising the young fool's high intelligence, the chief cut orders for him to attend 16 weeks of quartermaster training. This meant that Fonda would be a navigator's assistant — not good news. Maths had never been his forte, and during his training he would not only have to improve his mathematical skills, he would also have to master trigonometry and navigation equipment. His primary duty as quartermaster would be communications — signaling with blinkers and flags. He stayed up nights and studied as he had never done before, after which newly rated Quartermaster Third Class Fonda was on his way to his first ship, the USS *Satterlee* (DD-626), a Benson/Gleaves-class destroyer.

The *Satterlee* was the second US destroyer to be so named. The original was a World War I four-piper, part of the destroyers-for-bases deal reached between Britain and the United States. The British were desperate for more 'small boys' after their staggering losses early in World War II, and the US destroyers were turned over for Royal Navy service in September 1940. The original *Satterlee,* renamed HMS *Belmont,* was torpedoed and sunk by the German U-boat *U-82* on January 31, 1942 in the mid-Atlantic.

Fonda reported to the second *Satterlee* in May 1943 as she stood almost completed in the builder's ways at the Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Corporation. The ship's executive officer, Lieutenant Charles Cassell, reported around the same time, and when he boarded the ship, Fonda was one of those already aboard. Cassell later told Captain Alexander G. Monroe, USNR, in an interview for *Naval History* magazine, that Fonda 'had already, on his own, set up shop in one of the ship's offices and was hard at work checking inventory against allowance . . . and beginning the endless task of making corrections. He also checked regularly on shipyard work in the bridge area and took custody of the navigation equipment when it arrived. I should have done that work, but my XO duties kept me busy. As soon as possible, we selected a QM striker, but Fonda *was* the Navigation Department.' This was typical behaviour for the focused, steady Fonda. At times aloof, even unapproachable, Fonda brought to each task the same powers of concentration. (But he also knew how to have a right good time when the occasion called for it; after the war he and Jimmy Stewart partied for almost a year.)

The *Satterlee*'s sea trials began in May 1943 and ended with commissioning on July 1. As the ship left port and headed for San Diego, it was discovered that one crewman was missing, a signalman third class. Fonda accepted those responsibilities as well, meaning that he had to stand double watches and work twice as long and hard as the others. But when the *Satterlee* arrived in San Diego, Fonda was able to celebrate by hitching a ride to Hollywood and the farm.

He returned a week later to a new set of orders. He was to report to Naval Headquarters, 90 Church Street, New York City, for officer's training. Meanwhile, the *Satterlee* was to get under way the following day bound for Norfolk, Virginia. Because of Fonda's departure, there would be no quartermaster third and no signalman third. Fonda promptly volunteered to stay with the ship during the transit. If he was going to be an officer, he needed all the Navy experience he could get.



The *Satterlee* departed as planned, in company with three destroyers, escorting the British aircraft carrier *Victorious.* The group ran south to the Panama Canal, transited the canal, and sailed north to the naval base at Norfolk. During this transit Fonda had a hellish time with the signalman's part of his duties. Standing on a small perforated platform off the bridge behind the surface lookout, he had to read the signals from the *Victorious* and relay them to the striker, below him. A chain running across the front of the platform kept them from falling overboard. All this was tricky enough business under normal conditions, but when they hit stormy weather on their way to the Panama Canal, the lookout got seasick. Worse, the winds blew it straight into Fonda's face and telescope, making it all the more difficult — and unpleasant — for him to decipher the flagship's messages.

Shortly after their arrival in Norfolk, a relieved Fonda got shore leave along with the signalman first, whom he had befriended, and the two of them went out and got pie-eyed. The party went on until daybreak. Later that morning Fonda reeled onto the northbound train with his seabag and his orders to report to Naval Headquarters, New York. The ship's logbook notes recorded his departure: 'Fonda, H. J. 562-62-35, QM3/c, USN transferred to local receiving station for further transfer to Commandant 3rd Naval District for assignment by Bureau of Naval Personnel.'

Fonda reported to his new command in New York and was discharged as an enlisted man. Moments later he was sworn in again, as a lieutenant (jg). He was ordered to Washington to make training films at Naval Air Station Anacostia. But a bitterly disappointed Fonda managed to convince his new boss at Anacostia that he could best serve in air combat intelligence (ACI). The officer, who would have preferred to be anywhere but behind a desk himself, evidently was an understanding man and ordered Fonda to Naval Training School (Air Combat Intelligence), Naval Air Station Quonset Point, Rhode Island.

Fonda found his new training much to his liking. His schoolmates were mayors, district attorneys, young judges—bright people with interesting backgrounds. In their company he learned coding, photo interpretation, and other requisite skills, finishing the course in the upper quarter of his class. Finally granted his wish to join the fighting Navy, the newly designated ACI officer was ordered to the seaplane tender USS *Curtiss* (AV-4) to serve as assistant air operations officer under Vice Admiral John Howard Hoover, Commander Forward Area Central Pacific.

Before Fonda's departure, a fellow ACI officer spoke to the green men about what to expect in the Pacific. Among other admonishments, he advised them confidentially to bring along as much liquor as they could carry. It would come in handier than anything else when they needed to bargain for boats, vehicles, or whatever their admirals told them to get.

After a week's leave with his family, Fonda travelled north to San Francisco and boarded a Dutch freighter that took him and several other ACI officers to Pearl Harbor. In a parachute bag he carried 14 bottles of top-grade bourbon, carefully wrapped.

A two-week cram course in anti-submarine warfare at Kaneohe, Hawaii, was followed by temporary assignment to the staff of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, the US naval commander in the Pacific. As an additional duty, Fonda was made an officer-courier and soon found himself en route to Kwajalein atoll delivering dispatches to Admiral Nimitz (whose flagship was the carrier *Essex* [CV-9]). He made the mistake of leaving his parachute bag in a Quonset hut while taking a launch out to the *Essex.* Upon his return, he discovered that the bag had undergone a series of mishaps culminating in its being tossed out of a departing plane onto the runway. At least four bottles had been smashed. Dripping with bourbon, Fonda reported to his new home, where the executive officer ordered him to hand over all of his clothes for early, emergency-only laundering.

The *Curtiss* provided maintenance and general support for the PBM seaplanes of Patrol Bomber Squadron (VPB) 216. The PBM 'Mariners' collected intelligence that was processed by Fonda and his small group of photo interpreters and analysts. Information gathered from numerous frames of aerial film and post-mission debriefings were dispatched to higher command for use in tactical planning and Fonda routinely briefed and debriefed squadron crews.

The *Curtiss*'s wartime patrols 'lasted most of the daylight hours', remembers VPB 216 commanding officer Captain Harry E. Cook, 'and most landings were made in the late afternoon.' Cook's account (from the *Naval History* interview with Captain Monroe) continues: 'Because we had to refuel from tenders, it was well after dark before we secured to a mooring buoy for the night. The real problem was that shortly after dark the Japanese began their nightly bombing attacks . . . [This] went on until Commander Forward Area Central Pacific arrived, embarked in USS *Curtiss* . . . [Then] things started changing fast, and soon there was an anti-submarine net around the whole anchorage, and we no longer were able to have movies on the weather decks because darken ship and other regulations were more tightly enforced.'

Fonda's conscientiousness made a lasting impression on Cook, in particular once in late 1944, when one of his patrolling aircraft reported the sighting of a Japanese submarine. Fonda, who was staff watch officer at the time, received the report and knew he had to move immediately to alert naval forces in the area. 'Action on his part was necessary', Cook says, 'and he left to issue the warning to alert all units present. He was in such a hurry that he stumbled as he started down a ladder . . . with the result that he suffered a bad laceration . . . [He] continued full tilt until he had completed his duty and only then did he get to sick bay for treatment.'

Mister Roberts **in which he portrayed the leading character, both in the 1948 stage play and the film version in 1955, enabled Fonda to relive his days in the Pacific. Not only was he able to draw on his first-hand experience of life at sea . . . but he also wore his own original wartime cap to add a nice touch of authenticity.**

Later that day Fonda served as master of ceremonies for a ship board entertainment program featuring renowned banjoist and Naval Reserve officer Eddie Peabody. As he took to the makeshift stage, Fonda received a standing ovation — his shipmates' demonstration of their approval of Lieutenant Fonda.

Shortly after Fonda reported aboard the *Curtiss,* the ship moved on to Eniwetok. The general-quarters alarm went off regularly, and all hands grabbed life preservers and helmets and rushed to the deck. Fonda was assigned to battle stations only a few times during the war.

The *Curtiss* moved with the fleet as it mounted campaigns against Guam, Saipan, and Iwo Jima. With Americans now within striking distance of their home islands, the Japanese initiated kamikaze operations, which took a heavy toll on US combatants and their crews. When the ship was off Saipan in December 1944, Tokyo Rose broadcast information about the seaplane tender, including the fact that actor Henry Fonda was on board. She promised that Japanese forces would soon sink the ship, and within a few days the *Curtiss* was indeed attacked, narrowly missing being hit by kamikazes.

Fonda first saw one of these suicide planes when the *Curtiss*'s guns shot it down and it crashed into the water some 25 yards from the ship. Fonda believed that his duty was to collect whatever intelligence he could from the downed aircraft, and the next day, after things had quieted down, he and two sailors climbed into shallow-water diving gear. They dived down to the plane, about 30 feet below the surface, finding the bodies of the pilot and bombardier still strapped into their overturned aircraft. Fonda and his mates recovered maps, flight plans, and other valuable documentation.

ACI officer Fonda, now a full lieutenant, studied it all and concluded that the kamikazes were being launched from tiny Pagan Island in the middle of the Marianas chain. On his recommendation, Admiral Hoover ordered air strikes against the island, and for the next few weeks the Japanese attacks stopped.

In addition to the kamikaze attacks, the fleet was faced with increasing Japanese submarine activity, and Fonda was able put to good use the ASW training he had received at Kaneohe. Since naval intelligence had broken the Japanese code, forces afloat knew the date of departure, speed, and course of enemy subs operating in their area. Using this information, Fonda would plot a sub's course on a sheet of Plexiglas and devise a search pattern. On one occasion, naval forces were deployed to an area in which Fonda had estimated a sub's position. An attack was made, and the Japanese sub was destroyed.

In late June 1945, the *Curtiss* put into Guam, and Fonda and his cabin mate went ashore on liberty. While they were enjoying their brief respite, the *Curtiss* headed back to sea, and on June 22 the ship was hit by a Frank kamikaze off Okinawa on the starboard forward at the third-deck level. This was the last attack of the Floating Chrysanthemum/Kikusui 10 kamikaze operation and the end of the Divine Wind that had been planned to save Japan. Aboard the *Curtiss,* it took 15 hours to bring the fires under control, by which time the forward magazine had been flooded and only half the ship was livable. The seaplane tender lost 41 men, with 28 wounded. When the *Curtiss* staggered back to port at Guam, Fonda and his cabin mate went aboard and found their quarters destroyed.

Admiral Hoover shifted his flag to Guam, and it was there that Fonda learned of VE Day. The event brought home a grim reality to the Hoover command: even though it would mean more men and ships available for Pacific duty, taking Japan would still be a bitter struggle. There would be massive casualties.

Serving with Air Combat Intelligence, Lieutenant Fonda pictured with two members of the staff of Vice Admiral John Hoover: Lieutenant Jack Breed, the admiral's aide, and Flag Lieutenant Kenneth B. Van de Water, on the flagship on July 19, 1944.

At the beginning of August, Fonda and his boss, the air operations officer on Hoover's staff, flew to Tinian and met the crew of the *Enola Gay*. They were among the few intelligence officers who had access to what was being planned. Fonda did not know precisely what the B-29's effect would be, but he did recognise the significance of its presence. Upon their return to Guam the officers kept the secret, which was revealed to the world when, on August 6, 1945, the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima (see *After the Battle* No. 41).

A week later Fonda pulled the 2300-0700 communications-desk watch which meant he had to sort through the dispatches that were brought at regular intervals from the communications Quonset hut. About mid-watch, he came across a message for him that sent him into a fury. He was ordered to report to Washington, on a Priority Two basis, to participate in the Naval Radio Hour program. Fonda had successfully avoided such duty thus far, but a Priority Two meant he was to leave posthaste. While fuming over these orders, he heard a commotion in the communications hut. Finally a guard came in carrying the latest batch of dispatches, wearing the biggest smile Lieutenant Fonda had ever seen: Japan had given up, he announced. At first Fonda did not believe him, but then, left alone again and smoking a cigarette, he knew it was really over.

With his Priority Two in hand and not minding at all now, Fonda was on his way the day after the dispatch had arrived. Hung over but still continuing the celebrations that had begun the previous day, he attended a brief ceremony before boarding a plane that would take him to the States. Vice Admiral G. D. Murray, USN, Commander Marianas, in the name of the President of the United States, awarded Lieutenant Fonda the Bronze Star with the following citation:

'For distinguishing himself by meritorious service in connection with operations against the enemy as an Assistant Operations Officer and Air Combat Intelligence Officer on the Staff of Commander Forward Area Central Pacific and Commander Marianas from 12 May 1944 to 12 August 1945. He contributed materially to the planning and execution of air operations which effectively supported the Marianas, Western Carolines, and Iwo Jima Campaigns, neutralized enemy installations on nearby enemy-held islands and atolls, and which subsequently developed into search missions in Empire waters and strikes on the Japanese mainland. His keen intelligence, untiring energy and conscientious application to duty were in a large measure responsible for his successful contribution to the Central Pacific campaign.'

Henry Fonda had been proved right: he had had a very important contribution to make to the war effort. After a brief tour in Navy Public Affairs in Washington, he left active duty, remaining in the Naval Reserve until November 1953.

Henry Fonda's first post-war film part was as the sheriff in *My Darling Clementine,* seen here with Ward Bond, left, and Roy Roberts.

In Hollywood, after celebrating extensively along with the rest of the country, Fonda got back to work. The first film in which he appeared was the Western *My Darling Clementine,* touted by the *New York Times* as one of the ten best pictures of 1946. Among the numerous movies he made subsequently was *Mister Roberts,* Thomas Heggen's timeless war story set in the Pacific. Fonda was able to bring first-hand experience to his outstanding performance as the leading character on both the stage (1948) and screen (1955; the picture was saluted by the Academy as one of the year's best). The officer's cap he wore during these performances was the same one he had worn during the war in the Pacific.

Fonda's association with the Navy was to last for many more years, if sporadically. On July 4, 1957, he and fourth wife Afdera were living in a villa on the Riviera, near Villefranche. A US cruiser was anchored in the harbour, and Fonda decided to treat the boys to an Independence Day celebration. He had

Inevitably, it was the military characterisations for which we remember Fonda most. *Above:* **A break with director Ken Annakin during the making of *Battle of the Bulge* in 1965.**

stashed away several hundred dollars' worth of fireworks. As the daylight faded, he blasted a rocket off the terrace, over the water in the direction of the ship. The cruiser responded immediately in kind, alternating with Fonda and continuing to send up colourful displays long after his supply had run out.

During the Vietnam War, at age 62, Fonda served again. Although the actor did not approve of US involvement in the conflict, the United Service Organizations executive who called him was able to convince him that he owed it to the American servicemen to help boost their morale however he could; the war was not their fault. Fonda partici-

Right: ***The Immortal Sergeant* — an inspirational war film released in 1943 in which a battle-hardened sergeant is killed after inspiring his recruits . . .**

. . . and as Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, here landing on Utah Beach, in *The Longest Day* released in 1962.

pated in the Handshake Tours of April 1967, flying all over South Vietnam and out to the carriers *Ticonderoga* (CV-14), *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63), and *Bennington* (CV-20). He had taken the precaution of bringing along a Polaroid camera and plenty of film, fearful that he would not be able to think of anything to say. Neither standup comedy nor light chatting had ever been his bent. But the camera was a hit, and everyone seemed to want to be photographed with Henry Fonda.

He disapproved as well of his daughter Jane's later actions in Vietnam but understood that her motivation was pure; she simply failed to grasp the big picture. In perhaps an encapsulated version of their country's heartbreaking division over the ill-fated US involvement in Vietnam, father and daughter disagreed, fought, and later came to terms with what became history.

Henry Fonda's many memorable plays and movies include *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial* (Broadway, 1955), *War and Peace* (1956), *Advise and Consent* (1962), *In Harm's Way* (1965), and *On Golden Pond* (1981). He won the 1981 Academy Award for best actor for his performance in the latter (and had won an honorary Academy Award the previous year for his accomplishments in his field); and that same year the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle honoured him with a lifetime achievement award. He died in 1982.

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No stranger to war, years later Fonda had to fight his own longest battle — and perhaps the hardest one of all — with his own daughter over her vehement stand against America's involvement in Vietnam. It was a 'war and peace' argument typified by yet another of his roles, this time with Audrey Hepburn in the film of that name. Henry Fonda is just one of the many Hollywood actors whose wartime careers are included in *Stars in Blue*.

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